



# SDG REPORT



**THE GLOBAL GOALS**  
For Sustainable Development



## SDG 1. NO POVERTY

**1** NO  
POVERTY





## **Student Anti-Poverty Programmes**

Sakarya University implements a comprehensive, integrated anti-poverty framework addressing multidimensional poverty among students through coordinated interventions targeting food insecurity, housing stability, emergency cash assistance, healthcare access, and academic support. The system operates with transparent governance, clear eligibility criteria, and published outcomes to ensure equitable access and verifiability, thereby reducing poverty-related attrition risks and safeguarding academic continuity.

National higher education admissions in Turkey are standardized and not income-based; therefore, Sakarya University operationalizes equity post-enrolment through an explicit commitment that no student is deprived of educational opportunity due to lack of income. This commitment is translated into transparent, needs-based supports prioritizing students at or below the hunger threshold, with clear procedures to maintain fairness and non-discrimination.

The institutional policy guarantees that students whose household income is at or below the hunger threshold can access one or more forms of support—food bursaries, accommodation scholarships, and cash assistance—without merit barriers. Early awareness is ensured during registration, and evaluations follow published, auditable criteria so that support reaches those most in need reliably and on time.

The annual Meal Bursary Cycle provides predictable, needs-based nutrition relief: the 2024–2025 public call ran 1–11 October 2024 with results on 15 October 2024, ensuring transparency and activation at the start of the academic year when pressures are highest; governance rests on the University Scholarship Regulation and the Scholarships Hub, while prior-cycle calls and results remain publicly accessible for verification. The number of students receiving meal bursaries is approximately 1,000. As stated in the university's performance report, a total of 1,530,000 meals were served in campus dining halls in 2024.

Daily Soup Distribution stabilizes immediate nutrition during the Fall 2024 semester, offering a visible, low-barrier morning safety net that reduces hunger-driven absenteeism and supports cognitive readiness—particularly for students with early labs, long commutes, or shift work—without stigma or application requirements.

Finals-Week Nutritional Relief targets peak stress periods; on 28 May 2024, hot soup was provided during examinations to mitigate fatigue and performance decline associated with hunger, supporting academic equity at critical assessment moments for financially constrained students.

Meal Price Transparency safeguards affordability and predictability through publicly posted 2024 student dining prices across campus facilities; students with meal bursaries are fully exempt from lunch and dinner charges, removing cost barriers to adequate nutrition.

Shared Access through municipal iftars extends nutrition security beyond campus via collaboration with the Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality during Ramadan 2024, strengthening social inclusion, providing reliable evening meals for low-income and commuter students, and embedding anti-poverty efforts in local community systems. During Ramadan in 2024, more than 2,000 people were served meals each day at the iftar programs organized by Sakarya University.

Housing Stability is provided through cost-controlled university dormitories in 2024–2025, with allocation overseen by the Dormitory Management and Disciplinary Board (per the University Dormitories Regulation, Article 25); eligible students may receive free accommodation at Esentepe Student Dormitory, with decisions prioritizing transparent, need-based criteria.

Healthcare Access mitigates poverty-related health shocks through two complementary pathways. First, Faculty of Medicine services within the Ministry of Health network offer free care to citizens, students, and staff. Second, Mediko on-campus primary and acute services provide convenient, low-barrier care that prevents health-related academic disruption.

Academic Advisory and Capacity-Building Support ensures that scholarship recipients and identified low-income students receive individualized advisor monitoring without minimum performance thresholds, recognizing poverty as a performance barrier; capacity-building includes social assistance literacy, financial planning, poverty-response strategies, and study skills to strengthen resilience and informed uptake of support services.

Student Representation and Advocacy helps protect social and economic rights via student unions at faculty level that organize events, elevate student needs, and communicate directly with administration—keeping anti-poverty measures responsive to lived realities and improving procedural fairness and delivery.

Expanded Scholarship Diversity complements core supports through alumni-funded scholarships, the SAU Foundation, faculty-level discipline-based awards, and international student supports; combined, these mechanisms tailor assistance to varied circumstances, reducing multidimensional risks and widening access pathways with centralized information via the Study at SAU portal and Scholarships Hub.

Priority Populations are explicitly recognized—students at or below the hunger threshold, low-income students, students with disabilities, relatives of martyrs and veterans, and international students (with dedicated allocations)—ensuring timely and adequate support for the most vulnerable groups.

Programme Governance and Accountability is anchored in codified regulations (Scholarship Regulation, Dormitories Regulation), published procedures, and centralized guidance through the Scholarships Hub, including transparent calls, results, price lists, and feedback channels for continuous improvement and external verification.

Evidence of Impact and Continuous Improvement includes reduced attrition risk through stabilized food and housing, significant reduction of hunger-driven absenteeism via daily and finals-week nutrition, strengthened trust through transparency, and multi-year continuity evidenced by published cycles and diversified portfolios aligned to evolving needs.

Open Education and Learning Access complements anti-poverty supports with free learning opportunities: SAU provides open, no-cost education resources and open courses via SAUX; professors also deliver open lectures that broaden academic access, while the University Library ensures students' on-campus and remote access to extensive collections and, indirectly, access to numerous international scholarly platforms that reduce out-of-pocket learning costs. The University Library's Open Courses page offers a curated gateway to open courses and learning resources with clear access information, strengthening free academic enrichment for all students. Through the Library's authentication and subscriptions, students also gain remote, no-cost access to major international scholarly databases and platforms, substantially lowering learning costs and widening equitable access.

### **Community Anti-Poverty Programmes**

Sakarya University extends its anti-poverty impact beyond campus by integrating capability-building, entrepreneurship, livelihoods, nutrition security, ethical finance, and shared safety nets through the Community Contribution and Sustainability Office (TOKAS). This multi-stakeholder approach translates

academic expertise into practical, measurable benefits for households, aligning with local needs and strengthening social protection.

TOKAS serves as the central convening platform for public agencies, municipal authorities, NGOs, faculty, students, and private partners to co-design anti-poverty actions. Through partnership-driven governance, interventions are locally anchored, evidence-based, and sustainable, as exemplified by the "Collaboration in Combating Poverty" multi-stakeholder meeting that coordinated strategies across education, livelihoods, nutrition, and social protection.

The Partnership Ecosystem includes Sakarya Teknokent for innovation infrastructure and incubation, the Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality for inclusive community meals and social programming, NGOs for joint design and delivery, private-sector mentors and investors for scale, and the National Vocational Qualifications Authority (MYK) to align training with national standards and improve access to decent work.

Lifelong Learning via the Continuing Education Center (SAUSEM) delivers over one hundred training and certificate programmes that enhance employability, microenterprise capacity, and income generation; with MYK-aligned certification, flexible schedules, and sector-specific pathways, SAUSEM reduces skill gaps, supports career transitions, and directly bolsters economic resilience among low-income community members.

Entrepreneurship, Incubation, and Technology Transfer are supported through Sakarya Teknokent, the Business Incubation Center, Adaptto (Technology Transfer Office), and SARGEM (R&D); subsidized spaces, mentoring, financial instruments, IP support, and prototyping/testing services de-risk venture creation and growth; additionally, Sakarya Teknokent's G-Young entrepreneurship programme offers youth a structured pathway into entrepreneurship with mentoring, incubation, and ecosystem access.

The Curriculum-Embedded Entrepreneurship Pipeline requires all students to complete the Entrepreneurship and Project Management course, ensuring universal exposure to ideation, feasibility, and planning; high-potential projects are channeled to incubation and mentoring with grant access and faculty/industry guidance, democratizing opportunity and widening the livelihoods funnel.

The G-FAST Entrepreneurship Acceleration Programme, jointly run by the University, Teknokent, and Adaptto, competitively selects projects from students across all universities for faculty mentorship, structured acceleration, financial awards, grant access, and ecosystem integration—accelerating job-creating, socially impactful solutions.

Ethical Finance and Community Solidarity are advanced through Karz-ı Hasen education that builds financial literacy, promotes interest-free solidarity mechanisms, and reduces vulnerability to exploitative credit; the Islamic Economics Association (established by the university's academics in 2018) supports research, advocacy, and policy engagement on equitable, solidarity-based economic systems.

Household Nutrition Security and Waste Prevention were strengthened by the 2024 Food Safety and Household Nutrition Workshop, teaching cost-effective storage, safe preparation, waste reduction, and nutritional literacy; scalable delivery through SAUSEM equips households with immediately applicable practices that reduce food costs and improve health.

Community Cohesion and Shared Meals were fostered through inclusive iftar gatherings in partnership with the Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality during Ramadan 2024, providing reliable evening meal access, reducing isolation, and reinforcing municipal–university collaboration as a community safety net.

Affordable Nutrition through R&D was advanced by a 2024 plant-based egg alternative—an affordable, highly nutritious protein substitute responsive to food price volatility—supported by SARGEM and Adaptto's transfer pathways, translating research into everyday nutrition solutions.

Disaster Response and Psychosocial Support comprise in-kind aid, emergency financial assistance, trauma counseling, and research for reconstruction in earthquake contexts—addressing immediate survival, mental health, and evidence-based recovery to prevent disaster-induced poverty traps.

Outcomes and Community Impact include improved employability via SAUSEM's MYK-aligned credentials, diversified livelihoods through an integrated entrepreneurship ecosystem, enhanced food security via household training and shared meals, strengthened financial resilience through ethical finance education, and heightened disaster resilience through coordinated relief and psychosocial care.

Science Communication and Public Engagement were implemented in 2024 through targeted science communication initiatives and public scientific events—supported by the Science and Future: Science for Society activities—translating academic expertise into accessible knowledge that strengthens social resilience.

### **Access to Basic Services**

Sakarya University organises structured training and programmes that expand access to essential services for students and the wider community, combining advisory guidance with capability building, ethical finance education, nutrition security, and partnership based safety nets.

Advisory and equitable uptake of services

Students receive targeted academic advising and “social assistance literacy” to navigate scholarships, meal bursaries, accommodation, health services, and emergency aid. The Scholarships Hub provides clear guidance, FAQs, required documentation, and published calls/results, reducing barriers and increasing on time uptake—especially for first time and international applicants. Timing and communications are co designed with student representatives to align with key decision points (e.g., the main meal bursary call aligned with the start of term).

### **Lifelong learning and skills for essential services and livelihoods**

Through SAUSEM, the University delivers 100+ training programmes and certificates (including MYK aligned pathways) that build employability and micro enterprise capacity—strengthening household resilience and sustained access to essential services through stable income.

### **Ethical finance and community solidarity**

On 27 December 2024, a public Karz ı Hasen education programme built financial literacy and promoted interest free solidarity mechanisms among families and youth, reducing exposure to exploitative credit and improving access to affordable, ethical finance. This sits within a TOKAS convened ecosystem (public agencies, municipality, NGOs, academics, students) that co designs anti poverty actions.

### **Household nutrition security and waste prevention**

In 2024, the University ran a Food Safety and Household Nutrition Workshop on cost effective storage, safe preparation, nutrition literacy, and waste reduction—directly lowering food costs and improving reliable access to adequate nutrition for low income households, with scalable delivery via SAUSEM.

Community safety nets and inclusive access to meals During Ramadan 2024, inclusive iftar programmes with the Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality provided reliable evening meals for students and residents with limited resources, strengthening social inclusion and local safety nets.

### **Governance, co creation, and outcomes**

The Sustainability Commission and TOKAS ensure transparent, auditable delivery; student voice is embedded via the Student Senate, faculty unions, and continuous feedback loops that refine eligibility clarity, timelines, and communications. Documented procedures (Scholarship Regulation, Dormitories Regulation), public price lists, and published calls/results build trust and accountability. Reported outcomes include higher on time uptake of support services, improved persistence and well being, and measurable gains in food and financial resilience.

### **Governance and Policy for No Poverty**

Sakarya University embeds anti-poverty work within auditable governance structures and multi-level policy engagement to ensure transparency, equity, and sustained accountability. This architecture spans campus to global arenas, integrating regulations, procedures, student voice, crisis protocols, and circular practices that protect affordability and access.

The Sustainability Commission (2024–2025) aligns policies and units across scholarship systems, housing, food, health access, and emergency supports; it monitors implementation quality, equity, accessibility, and compliance, facilitating information sharing and systemwide coherence for measurable impact.

TOKAS acts as the community-facing governance platform, convening public agencies, municipalities, NGOs, faculty, students, and private partners to co-design and coordinate anti-poverty actions. The "Collaboration in Combating Poverty" meeting illustrates shared priorities, clarified roles, resource coordination, and joint accountability mechanisms.

Faculty participate in multi-level policy-making: locally and regionally via SESAM's applied research on poverty, labor markets, and social protection; nationally via ISEFAM and İKSAR informing strategies on poverty reduction, financial inclusion, employment, and regional disparities; and globally via SETA contributing comparative research and policy analysis on international poverty-reduction frameworks.

Public Communication by faculty through national (TRT) and local broadcasters translates economic analysis and policy guidance into accessible information on poverty trends, financial literacy, crisis response, and employment—building societal capacity for informed decision-making and resilience.

Documented Regulations and Transparent Procedures include the publicly accessible Scholarship Regulation (eligibility, evaluation, documentation, due process, non-discrimination) and the centralized Scholarships Hub with guidance, eligibility, step-by-step applications, published results, and FAQs—reducing information asymmetries and improving equitable uptake.

The Annual Meal Bursary Cycle features public calls and results (e.g., 1–11 October 2024, results on 15 October 2024) with historical continuity (e.g., 2023–2024) for year-over-year verification, trend analysis, and accountability, while Public Student Meal Price Lists ensure affordability, predictability, and protection against arbitrary cost shocks.

Equitable Housing Admissions and Cost Control are governed by the Dormitory Management and Disciplinary Board and the University Dormitories Regulation (Article 25), prioritizing low-income students and codifying fair allocation procedures, cost controls, and appeals—preventing displacement, overcrowding, and excessive commuting that undermine academic success.





## SDG 2. ZERO HUNGER

2 ZERO  
HUNGER



## **Food Waste on Campus**

Sakarya University operates a campus-wide Zero Waste Program that integrates prevention at source, measurement, safe same-day redistribution, and the conversion of organics to renewable resources within a single, cohesive system. Social responsibility is embedded in food service operations so that safe, unserved meals are routed first to people in need through coordination with the Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality, while non-edible organic fractions are separated at source and converted into energy or biofertilizer, making circular economy practice a daily operational standard across kitchens, dining halls, and service points.

Under the University's agreement with the on-campus catering company, the amount of food waste is measured before disposal at relevant preparation and service points. These measurements create a traceable baseline for continuous improvement and feed directly into portioning, menu design, and production scheduling so that output aligns with real demand and plate waste is systematically reduced without undermining predictable access to balanced meals.

Same-day redistribution is implemented under formal food safety protocols that protect quality and dignity while turning edible surplus into immediate social benefit. Unserved but safe meals are redirected the same day—via university-municipal coordination—to individuals identified as in need, reducing avoidable waste at the point of generation and directly strengthening local food security.

Organics unsuitable for consumption are collected separately at source and transferred to authorized partners. These streams are directed to biogas and liquid biofertilizer production, creating resource value, diverting organics from landfill, and lowering greenhouse gas impacts; the resulting compost and biofertilizer support campus green spaces and academic projects, reinforcing circular practices through visible, practical application.

Designated organic waste collection areas operate across campus with labeled points, safe handling rules, and clearly assigned roles and responsibilities for students, staff, vendors, and cleaning crews. Stream differentiation, vendor obligations, and routing steps are standardized by the Zero Waste Program framework, which also enables measurement and reporting, incident logging, and performance tracking so implementation remains consistent and auditable across the year.

System performance is monitored through indicators that link operations to outcomes: total food waste measured at source, edible portions redirected the same day, the share of organics sent to biogas and biofertilizer streams, compliance of collection points, and audit findings. Insights from these indicators drive menu and portion optimization, in-service training for food service teams, vendor feedback loops, and contract refinements, locking in year-round performance gains and transparent accountability.

Waste reduction and resource efficiency are achieved by coupling upstream measurement with demand-aligned production, which prevents unnecessary preparation and lowers plate waste while maintaining reliable access to meals across campus. This prevention-first approach minimizes surplus generation and ensures that any surplus is immediately managed within a human-centered, safety-compliant pathway.

Social benefit and food security are strengthened because edible surpluses are prioritized for people the same day they arise, with municipal collaboration creating a verifiable routing mechanism that operates at the point of highest impact. This practice reduces avoidable disposal, supports dignified access to food for those in need, and demonstrates a practical, community-anchored application of responsibility in campus dining.

Circular economy and environmental gains are realized as inedible organics are valorized into biogas and biofertilizer rather than landfilled, closing material loops and reducing emissions associated with decomposing food waste. The visible reuse of outputs in campus landscaping and related projects embeds learning and reinforces a culture of circularity among students and staff.

Institutional accountability is maintained through standardized procedures, transparent monitoring, and openness to external review, ensuring continuity over time and stakeholder trust in how surplus is prevented, redirected, and recovered. In 2024, these program controls and operational routines continued to run as part of the University's year-round Zero Waste cycle, providing an auditable record of measurement, redistribution, and organics recovery across the campus system.

Complementing campus operations, the University supports local farmers and food producers with knowledge, skills, and technology for food safety and sustainable agriculture, addressing upstream causes of loss and waste in the regional food system. Faculty members in the Department of Food Engineering conduct applied studies on pests that damage agricultural products and provide direct support to farmers, while seminars, panels, and meetings disseminate sustainable agricultural methods and technologies to reduce avoidable loss before products reach market.

Farmers' demands, regional expectations, and local needs inform university R&D priorities, with investment in relevant research centers and laboratories to translate solutions into practice. By aligning research with producer realities and extending technical assistance into the field, the University helps prevent waste at its source, complements campus-level circular practices, and strengthens the broader ecosystem that sustains reliable, affordable, and responsibly managed food.

### **Student Hunger**

Sakarya University addresses student hunger through an integrated system that combines need-based meal support, transparent and affordable dining, immediate nutritional relief, housing stability, capacity upgrades, and waste-to-benefit practices, so that students have uninterrupted access to balanced meals and a reliable nutrition environment across campuses.

From 1–11 October 2024, the University opened its annual meal bursary call with no merit barrier for financially vulnerable students, and results were publicly released on 15 October 2024, creating a peer-verifiable allocation record at the point of highest financial pressure at the start of the academic year.

The Scholarships Hub provides up-to-date instructions, eligibility criteria, documentation examples, and application steps in one centralized place so first-time and international applicants can navigate support without barriers; proportionate documentation and plain-language guidance reduce administrative burden and improve on-time uptake.

Continuity and auditability are sustained by maintaining public calls and published results across cycles, establishing a verifiable trail that supports external review and deters bias in allocation; this transparency strengthens trust and equitable access to nutrition support.

In 2024, publicly posted student meal prices anchored affordability across dining halls, helping students plan budgets and protecting against price-driven exclusion; bursary recipients are not charged for lunch and dinner, and under the catering agreement a portion of the per-person meal cost is covered by the University so that all students can access meals at affordable prices.

Throughout the 2024 academic cycle, lunch and dinner service was available consistently across central and satellite locations, with menus designed by an expert dietitian to meet energy (kcal) needs and protect nutritional balance; standard, diet, vegetarian, and vegan options were provided, and if a meal was not suitable for vegetarians or vegans an alternative was included in the standard offer, with a salad bar available at every meal to sustain quality and choice.

Food safety and quality were safeguarded through regular inspections by Sakarya University and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry; samples were taken daily from meals for analysis and hygiene checks, ensuring that dining services remained reliable, safe, and central to Zero Hunger.

During Fall 2024, daily morning soup stations provided ready-to-eat, low-barrier nutrition for students commuting long distances, attending early labs, or facing breakfast insecurity, supporting concentration, attendance, and cognitive performance.

On 28 May 2024, evening hot soup services during the final examination period reduced hunger-related exhaustion and protected study stamina at a time of peak academic stress, preventing performance decline linked to nutritional gaps.

In Ramadan 2024, the University collaborated with the Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality to provide inclusive iftar meals on and near campus, ensuring reliable evening nutrition where household cooking capacity or support may be limited, while also reducing isolation and strengthening social support networks.

For the 2024–2025 academic year, cost-controlled university dormitories prevented displacement, overcrowding, and long commutes that undermine meal access; stable housing preserved proximity to affordable dining halls and campus services, lowering hunger vulnerability driven by indirect structural factors.

In 2024, the new cafeteria and canteen building at Sapanca Vocational School (MYO) expanded dining capacity and improved geographic reach across sub-campuses, reducing congestion and ensuring that bursaries and subsidies translated into real, timely access to meals.

Under the University's Zero Waste Program, food waste is measured before disposal in line with catering agreements, enabling upstream monitoring and continuous improvement in kitchens and service lines; edible, unserved meals are redirected the same day within food safety protocols through collaboration with the Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality to individuals identified as in need, while non-edible organics are separated and sent to authorized partners for recovery as biogas and liquid biofertilizer, with designated on-campus collection areas reinforcing circular practices that convert waste into community and environmental benefit.

In 2024, campus kitchen operations were aligned with surplus-aware planning and bursary-linked meal access, increasing the predictable availability of balanced, low-cost meals across central and satellite campuses and stabilizing daily nutrition for students at highest risk of skipping meals.

Ten percent of all food scholarships are specifically allocated to international students, extending Zero Hunger protections to non-national learners who face distinct vulnerabilities and ensuring that inclusivity is built into the core of need-based support.

Calls, results, and instructions are communicated through web pages, announcements, and campus-facing notices in clear, accessible language, while handoffs between the bursary process, dining affordability, and dormitory access are harmonized to prevent duplication and confusion, creating a coherent user journey that stabilizes daily nutrition at the moments students need it most.

Beyond meals, the University operates *Dükkan Senin*, a social responsibility project launched in 2019 and still ongoing, which provides new or gently used clothing and essential items free of charge to students in need, reducing financial pressure on household budgets and indirectly protecting food access by easing competing basic-needs costs.

Taken together, need-based bursaries with public timelines, posted prices and consistent menus, immediate relief aligned to peak need, inclusive community meals, stable housing near dining, capacity expansion at Sapanca MYO, same-day surplus redistribution with organics recovery, campus kitchen integration, an international student allocation, and user-centered communication create a fair, auditable, and resilient system for Zero Hunger that improves equity, boosts participation, and sustains academic continuity.

## **National Hunger**

Sakarya University contributes to national hunger solutions by translating research, facilities, and procurement policies into practical access for producers and households, while convening sector events and mobilising emergency food support so that knowledge, technology, and resources flow where they are most needed. In 2024, Food Engineering units advanced affordable protein research with a press-reported plant-based egg alternative designed as a low-cost, shelf-stable option for households facing price volatility, and a TÜBİTAK 1001 project underscored the national relevance of lines of inquiry focused on nutrient efficiency, food safety, and spoilage reduction, demonstrating a pipeline from laboratory innovation to population-level nutrition benefit.

Faculty—particularly in the Department of Food Engineering—provide farmers and food producers with sustained access to food security and sustainable agriculture knowledge, skills, and appropriate technologies by conducting applied pest management studies that reduce crop losses and by delivering regular seminars, panels, and meetings on sustainable methods and technologies. Farmer demands, regional expectations, and local needs shape R&D agendas so that solutions remain practice-ready and responsive to producer realities; in 2024 this responsive pipeline was maintained through targeted outreach, technical guidance, and rapid circulation of new findings to the field.

Access to facilities is formalised and practical. Local farmers and food producers can use university laboratories, specialised equipment, and plant stocks by submitting project requests through *TEKNOKENT* (Teknokent) or the Scientific Research Projects Unit; in response, cross-disciplinary R&D teams of faculty and research assistants are constituted to scope needs, design applied studies, and implement solutions that improve sustainable farming practices at scale. The Plant Tissue Culture



Research and Production Laboratory—established in cooperation with the Sakarya Chamber of Commerce and Industry—focuses on mass production of commercially important plants under aseptic conditions; programmes diversify according to producer demand, accelerating dissemination of resilient varieties and enabling more predictable yields under changing conditions, which directly supports national food availability.

This facilities backbone is complemented by a portfolio of research and application laboratories whose outputs are transferred back to producers through seminars and press briefings so that evidence moves swiftly from bench to farm and factory. The Food Analysis Laboratory, Milk and Dairy Products Technology Laboratory, Food Packaging and Preservation Laboratory, Food Biotechnology Laboratory, Food Microbiology Laboratory, and the Sustainable Food Processing Laboratory collectively advance methods for quality assurance, hygiene, reduced spoilage, and nutrient stability; in 2024, these labs supported guidance and technologies that producers could adopt without prohibitive cost, aligning scientific standards with field feasibility.

The University also convenes events that connect local farmers and producers for knowledge transfer and market-research matchmaking on an annual cycle. The International Ornamental Plants Festival—sponsored and partnered by Sakarya University and held every year in Sakarya—brings together shrub and tree producers; plant nutrition and spraying suppliers; irrigation and lighting firms; pot manufacturers; design and application offices; local governments; public institutions; large construction companies; and landscape architects, creating a dense exchange on sustainable techniques and access to quality inputs and services. In parallel, the University partners with the International Landscape, Ornamental Plants, Garden Arts, and Equipment Fair, and has been a regular partner of the Sakarya Agriculture, Livestock, Machinery, and Feed Technologies Fair since 2018; in 2024 these platforms again enabled repeated, predictable opportunities for rapid diffusion of improved practices that raise yields and reduce waste.

Institutional purchasing policies strengthen regional resilience by prioritising products from local and sustainable sources through both direct purchases and tenders. Sustainability conditions are written into specifications for relevant categories, and canteens and cafeterias procure from local producers to shorten supply chains, increase traceability and freshness, and support regional livelihoods. By embedding local, sustainable sourcing in everyday operations, the University models responsible consumption and signals demand that makes sustainable producer practices economically viable at regional scale.

Community-level access complements producer-facing services through inclusive shared meals that meet immediate needs. In Ramadan 2024, the University collaborated with the Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality to support large-scale public iftar programmes that extended reliable evening nutrition to low-income families and vulnerable groups citywide; these shared meals reduced isolation, strengthened social cohesion, and demonstrated how municipal-university partnerships can protect household food security during periods of heightened pressure.

Rapid crisis mobilisation extends the University's national contribution to hunger relief in emergencies. Following the Kahramanmaraş earthquakes, voluntary and institutional actions provided in-kind and financial aid, psychosocial services, and research projects for regional reconstruction; community programmes created child-friendly spaces and inclusive shared meals that restored social support networks. This capability to pivot from routine operations to coordinated, evidence-based emergency food protection illustrates how an academic institution can bridge humanitarian response and longer-term recovery while retaining scientific standards for safety and effectiveness.

Systems integration ensures that innovation reaches practice and policy. Laboratory research and TÜBİTAK-backed projects generate affordable, nutritionally valuable options that can be scaled through producer partnerships; pest management studies and on-demand R&D teams translate evidence into farm-level improvements that reduce post-harvest losses; sector fairs and policy dialogues, including TOKAS, connect households, producers, and policymakers to refine delivery models; local and sustainable procurement turns purchasing power into a lever for resilience; and emergency mobilisation informs durable reconstruction strategies. In 2024, these streams worked in concert so that the University could answer, in a verifiable and comprehensive way, the core national hunger questions: it provides farmers and producers access to knowledge, skills, and technology; it organises and partners in events that connect and transfer knowledge; it opens facilities—laboratories, technology, and plant stocks—through formal pathways that lead to applied solutions; and it prioritises purchasing from local, sustainable sources that stabilise regional food systems while modelling responsible consumption.

### **Governance and Student Participation for Zero Hunger**

Sakarya University embeds Zero Hunger within transparent, representative governance that coordinates academic and administrative units and actively incorporates student voice into decision-making. Institution-wide oversight by the Sustainability Commission aligns dining affordability policies, meal bursary procedures, and accommodation access within published strategic plans and annual targets open to external review, ensuring continuity and coherence across the year and making accountability a routine feature of operations.

Operational clarity and equitable access are maintained through a centralised Scholarships Hub that consolidates up-to-date eligibility criteria, documentation checklists, timelines, and step-by-step guidance in one place so first-time and international applicants can navigate support without barriers. In 2024, the Hub's plain-language instructions and proportionate documentation examples were refined to reduce administrative burden and improve on-time uptake, with revisions triggered by user feedback and verified during the October support cycle.

Accountability is reinforced by timed and public support cycles. The annual need-based meal bursary call ran from 1–11 October 2024, and results were published on 15 October 2024, creating a peer-verifiable allocation record at the point of highest financial pressure at the start of the academic year. This public timing and publication standard enables external review, deters bias in allocation, and builds trust among students who can see both the criteria and outcomes in the same window.

Affordability is anchored by publicly posted student meal prices during the 2024 academic cycle, protecting against price-driven exclusion and supporting predictable access to balanced meals. Consistent lunch and dinner availability across central and satellite campuses was sustained through 2024, with menus planned to maintain nutritional continuity so that students can rely on steady access regardless of location or timetable.

Student participation is embedded as a design principle and evidenced by structured representation. In 2024, the Student Senate held consultation sessions with university units responsible for dining services, scholarships, and housing to review affordability criteria, clarify documentation requirements, and align call calendars with real decision points in the semester. Meeting notes and action items from these Student Senate engagements informed the timing of announcements, the wording of outreach materials, and examples used for verification, directly improving discoverability and fairness.

Student clubs complemented representative governance with hands-on participation. Throughout 2024, clubs coordinated volunteer rosters that supported morning soup distribution and inclusive community meals, relayed real-time feedback on queueing, portioning, and peak-time congestion, and co-designed reminder campaigns for the October bursary window. These club-led contributions ensured that communication reached commuting, first-generation, and international students and that operational fine-tuning reflected user experience on the ground.

Continuous feedback loops are formalised within the governance framework so that student voice leads to measurable changes. Inputs captured through the Scholarships Hub, Student Senate consultations, and club channels were translated into updates to outreach language, clearer verification examples, and simplified process steps in 2024, reducing information asymmetries and lowering the administrative burden that often delays access for eligible students.

Housing policy is integrated as a core enabler of food access. For the 2024–2025 academic year, cost-controlled university dormitories stabilised living conditions, reduced commuting instability, and preserved proximity to affordable dining services, thereby lowering hunger vulnerability linked to indirect structural factors. Housing, dining, and scholarships were managed as connected pathways so that decisions in one area immediately reflected in the others without duplication or gaps.

This governance architecture connects institutional oversight to municipal and community partnerships that extend impact. In 2024, collaboration with the Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality supported inclusive iftar meals accessible to students and low-income households, while student clubs and representatives coordinated campus-based outreach and volunteer participation. The same integration logic ensured that campus dining operations could respond to peak-need moments—such as finals-week evening soup on 28 May 2024—through pre-agreed procedures and roles.

Together, formal oversight by the Sustainability Commission, a centralised Scholarships Hub with 2024 user-tested guidance, publicly timed and published bursary results (1–11 October 2024 call; 15 October 2024 results), posted meal prices and year-round service continuity in 2024, structured Student Senate consultations, active student club participation in communication and delivery, and housing integration for 2024–2025 create a fair, auditable, and resilient system for Zero Hunger. By ensuring that representative student mechanisms influence criteria, calendars, and communications—and by coupling those inputs with transparent timing, public results, and coordinated housing and dining—Sakarya University improves equity, boosts participation, and sustains academic continuity by making support accessible precisely when it matters most.



## SDG 3. GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

**3** GOOD HEALTH  
AND WELL-BEING



## **Collaborations and Health Services**

Sakarya University advances public health through a robust, integrated service-education-research model formalised by a standing protocol with the national health authority. Under this protocol, faculty clinicians provide care at the Sakarya University Training and Research Hospital while supervising clinical rotations and embedding the latest scientific evidence into routine practice. The protocol, clinical pathways, and operating procedures remained fully in effect throughout 2024, ensuring continuity of care, patient safety, quality assurance, and consistent access to specialist services for the regional population. This model simultaneously strengthens the clinical training pipeline—by exposing students and trainees to real-world decision-making under expert supervision—and accelerates the translation of research into measurable improvements in diagnostics, prevention, and treatment.

A sustained culture of scientific exchange keeps practice current and impact-oriented. The International Dental Oral Infections and Oral Microbiota Congress disseminated updated oral-microbiome-informed prevention and treatment guidance, informing protocols relevant to dentistry and systemic health. The National Physiology Congress supported the integration of contemporary physiological evidence into clinical reasoning, diagnostics, and therapeutics across disciplines. In 2024, a Neuroscience Symposium strengthened neurobehavioural and neurorehabilitation approaches, while a Clinical Microbiota Update advanced antimicrobial stewardship and precision diagnostics for complex cases. Ethical and complex-care standards were reinforced through organ donation and brain death panels in November 2024, alongside sessions on current approaches in kidney and liver transplantation during 2024 that clarified referral criteria, perioperative coordination, and long-term follow-up. Taken together, these collaborations and forums ensure that patient-centred, evidence-based care is consistently delivered to the community, that the health workforce remains up-to-date and competency-based, and that institutional policies and procedures retain their effectiveness and relevance through 2024.

In the context of ongoing collaborations and training programs in the field of health, from 2–7 September 2024, the Basic Wound Care Management Course of Sakarya University, which included international participants, was held at the Turgut Özal Culture and Congress Center of Sakarya University and at the Korucuk Campus of Sakarya University Education and Research Hospital.

## **Outreach Programmes and Projects in the Local Community**

In 2024, Sakarya University Foundation Schools (SAÜ Foundation Schools) established a strategic collaboration with the Special Education Department of the Faculty of Education at Sakarya University and the Ayşe Sadi Ünal Rehabilitation Center, which is known for its longstanding expertise. The aim of this collaboration was to enhance educational quality and elevate the level of services provided in the field of special education.

Sakarya University extends prevention, early detection, and caregiver support into the community through sustained, year-round education that prioritises accessibility, accuracy, and continuity. Programmes designed and implemented in previous years remained fully operational throughout 2024, with content adapted to local needs and delivered in formats that encourage participation and practical uptake.



Throughout 2024, the Hospital School Programme operated on a regular monthly basis within paediatric inpatient wards, ensuring continuity of learning and supporting the psychosocial well-being of children undergoing long-term treatment, thereby mitigating educational disruption and hospital-related anxiety.

In November 2024, a World Diabetes Week seminar advanced public literacy on metabolic risk, lifestyle modification, and self-management strategies, encouraging timely screening and consistent primary-care engagement.

Complementary outreach addressed musculoskeletal health and ageing-in-place. A Scoliosis and Posture Disorders seminar in 2024 emphasised early recognition, ergonomics-based non-invasive management, and appropriate referral to physiotherapy when indicated.

A Home Elderly and Palliative Care workshop in 2024 equipped family caregivers with practical, home-based care skills—covering symptom control, safety, mobility, nutrition, and communication—thereby improving quality of life for older adults and those requiring palliation.

Community-facing activities also covered sensitive and often misunderstood conditions: leukemia awareness efforts across 2024 dispelled common myths and encouraged prompt haematology referral at the first warning signs; autism inclusion programming in April 2024 promoted communication strategies, sensory-friendly practices, and stigma reduction to support social participation; and addiction-prevention training in March 2024, organised with civil-society partners, provided motivational tools, relapse-prevention techniques, and clear pathways to counselling and follow-up support.

In parallel with event-based outreach, the university delivers a broad portfolio of public education on core health topics through both face-to-face and online formats. Throughout 2024, open sessions and in-house trainings addressed family planning, healthy nutrition, obesity prevention, harmful substance use, infectious diseases, diet and health, sexual development, and privacy education. These offerings are designed to be inclusive and practical: students from all grade levels and departments can participate, and many sessions are open to non-university audiences to widen community reach. By combining accessible formats with clear, evidence-based guidance, the approach lowers barriers to accurate information, strengthens caregiver competence, and supports early detection and prevention where it is most actionable in everyday life.

Together, these efforts embed public health education within daily routines, reinforce health-promoting behaviours, and build community resilience. The programme mix in 2024—spanning hospital-based learning continuity, condition-specific seminars, caregiver training, and open public courses—translates academic expertise into tangible, real-world benefits, improving health literacy and self-management capacity across priority groups in the region.

### **Sharing Sports Facilities**

Sakarya University promotes active living and community well-being by opening campus sports infrastructure and organised programmes to broad participation. The approach is designed for inclusivity and continuity: activities are scheduled across the academic year so that students, staff, and

community participants can maintain regular, moderate-to-vigorous physical activity without barriers. This open, participation-focused model remained fully operational throughout 2024 and complements preventive health and counselling services by reinforcing daily routines that support cardiovascular fitness, functional movement, and stress regulation.

Recurring signature events embed physical activity into campus culture while strengthening social connection and peer support. The Rectorate Cup Sports Festival in 2024 brought together diverse teams and ability levels in an atmosphere of friendly competition and shared purpose. The Republic Cup in October 2024 celebrated community spirit and fair play, and the Spring Cup in May 2024 sustained seasonal momentum, encouraging continued participation as academic demands shifted. Throughout 2024, community-facing volleyball tournaments offered accessible, team-based engagement that welcomed new participants and helped regular players sustain exercise habits over time.

Sakarya University has opened its doors to the public to enable families and children to benefit from a wide range of opportunities, from the use of sports facilities to social, cultural, and educational activities in Summer 2024.

Together, these activities normalise enjoyable, low-threshold opportunities for movement, reduce lifestyle-related risk, and build a supportive culture of well-being that extends beyond individual events. By keeping facilities open and programming inclusive, the university translates health promotion into everyday practice—improving participation, strengthening social cohesion, and contributing to durable, preventive health benefits across the campus and the surrounding community.

### **Students' Access to Health-Care Services**

Sakarya University provides structured, navigable access to general and specialist health care through on-campus services and coordinated referral pathways. Operating procedures established in previous years remained fully in effect throughout 2024, reducing barriers to timely care by integrating campus-based support with local providers. Clear guidance helps students manage both chronic conditions and acute needs without interruption to their studies, while partnerships with regional services ensure continuity and quality across the full care pathway from first contact to follow-up.

On campus, the Medico-Social Centre serves as the primary entry point, delivering polyclinic services, preventive counselling, and coordinated referrals. A dedicated team of 16 staff ensures capacity for triage, first-line diagnosis, and care management, with seamless transition to specialist services at the training and research hospital when required. Throughout 2024, the Centre's collaboration with the Psychological Counselling and Guidance unit supported a seamless continuum between physical care, mental health support, and preventive guidance, so that students receive the right level of care at the right time under clear confidentiality safeguards. The Medico-Social Centre and the Provincial Directorate of Health provided various trainings open to the public on public health, first aid, and psychological resilience, among other topics in 2024.

Within this framework, students also access confidential sexual and reproductive health services as part of routine provision. In 2024, education sessions on prevention, consent, and early help-seeking were delivered alongside clinical counselling, enabling timely assessment, appropriate referral, and follow-up where indicated. The combined effect of structured pathways, dedicated staffing, privacy protections, and active education in 2024 was to increase the use of appropriate services when

needed, improve coordination across providers, and protect academic stability during health challenges.

### **Students' Access to Mental Health Support**

Sakarya University provides confidential, professional psychological counselling supported by clear referral pathways, privacy safeguards, and proactive prevention activities. Services are delivered through the Medico-Social Centre in close collaboration with the Psychological Counselling and Guidance unit, creating a seamless continuum between physical care, mental health support, and preventive guidance. Staffing remained stable throughout 2024 to secure timely access: two physicians (including one institutional physician) and seven nurses support the polyclinic and first-line care functions, while four psychologists and three support staff provide dedicated counselling, assessment, psychoeducation, and coordinated follow-up.

Throughout 2024, the service emphasised early intervention and visibility so that help-seeking feels approachable and stigma-free. In Autumn 2024, workshops on coping skills, test anxiety, and stress management prepared students for peak academic demands and encouraged timely access before problems escalated. A digital well-being series across 2024 addressed attention, sleep hygiene, social media use, and study routines, translating evidence-based strategies into everyday practice and reinforcing self-regulation skills. Where specialised care was indicated, students were guided through structured referral routes to appropriate providers under confidentiality protections, with continuity maintained via planned follow-ups and coordinated care plans.

This integrated model—combining trained professionals, defined pathways, and targeted education—strengthened psychological resilience and protected learning continuity in 2024. By aligning timely access with preventive programming and careful coordination, the university ensured that students received the right level of support at the right moment, improving well-being outcomes while sustaining academic persistence.

### **Smoke-Free Campus and Policy**

Sakarya University enforces a campus-wide smoke-free policy aligned with national public health standards, protecting students, staff, and visitors from second-hand smoke and promoting harm reduction. Throughout 2024, the policy was fully in effect across indoor and outdoor spaces, with smoking permitted only in clearly designated areas. To support compliance, signage was refreshed and high-visibility floor markings were applied in 2024—especially near building entrances, windows, and air intakes—so campus boundaries and expectations remained unambiguous. Routine communication and visible reminders reinforced adherence, creating an environment where the healthy choice is the easy choice.

Education and behaviour-change support translated policy into sustained practice. In May 2024, actions aligned with World No Tobacco Day publicly reinforced smoke-free norms, raised awareness of second-hand smoke risks, and encouraged student participation in health advocacy. Across 2024, joint awareness campaigns with civil-society partners—including collaboration with the Green Crescent—strengthened community mobilisation, peer-to-peer reinforcement, and access to credible prevention resources. Trainings on addiction prevention delivered practical, skills-based methods for resisting initiation and supporting cessation, while the Harms of Tobacco seminar deepened scientific understanding of addiction risks and disease burden. Positive, identity-based messaging—such as the "Don't be addicted, be free" initiative—encouraged smoke-free lifestyles and resilience, and students

seeking to reduce or cease tobacco use were guided confidentially to counselling and follow-up through the Medico-Social Centre.

By combining a clear regulatory framework with campus design cues, civil-society partnerships, targeted education, and accessible cessation support, the university reduced tobacco exposure, improved air quality, and lowered long-term disease risks in 2024. The result is a prevention-oriented culture in which compliance is credible, help-seeking is stigma-free, and health-promoting choices are easier to sustain.

### **Staff Access to Mental Health Support**

Sakarya University provides confidential psychological support for staff, delivered under professional standards that ensure privacy and restrict the use of any information to aggregated insights for service improvement. Access is organised through the Medico-Social Centre working in close coordination with the Psychological Counselling and Guidance unit, so that staff can move seamlessly from initial contact to counselling, brief interventions, and—where clinically indicated—coordinated referrals. Service capacity was maintained throughout 2024 to secure timely access and continuity: two physicians (including one institutional physician) and seven nurses support first-line care in the polyclinic, while four psychologists and three support staff provide dedicated counselling, assessment, psychoeducation, and planned follow-up under clear confidentiality safeguards. Operating procedures established in previous years remained fully in effect during 2024, ensuring consistent standards, clear pathways, and approachable, stigma-free entry points to care. In this context, the Medico-Social Unit has provided personnel with a wide range of trainings, including psychological resilience, public health, and first aid interventions.

Alongside individual support, the university delivered targeted psychoeducational activities in 2024 to prevent escalation and strengthen coping resources. Seminars on stress management, digital well-being, and work-life balance complemented one-to-one counselling by translating evidence-based techniques into practical routines for everyday work. Staff were encouraged to seek help early, with straightforward guidance on how to access services and what to expect at each step of the pathway. This integrated approach—combining confidential counselling, brief interventions, coordinated referrals, and focused education—reduced barriers to care, supported early intervention, and helped maintain a safe, healthy, and productive working environment throughout 2024.



# SDG 4. QUALITY EDUCATION

**4** QUALITY  
EDUCATION





## Public Access to Educational Resources

The physical and digital resources of Sakarya University Libraries, which host rich information collections and accommodate up to 1,650 users, are accessible to the public. All devices within the library buildings can be used by visitors, and the Library Unit organizes public training sessions on how to use these resources effectively. The library provides guest Wi-Fi, photocopying, and Internet Hall facilities, while Block A operates 24/7, ensuring continuous access for external users. In addition, the Library FAQ confirms that how guest researchers may use on-site information resources.



Sakarya University maintains a robust framework for digital and open access. The Open Academic Archive (DSpace) enables the general public to freely access theses, dissertations, and scholarly outputs, including numerous full-text master's theses published in 2024. The library also curates a list of open-access databases, provides user-training videos, and issues open-access announcements. Through publisher agreements with Springer Nature and Wiley (2024–2026), the University has expanded the number of publications available under open-access terms, further promoting knowledge dissemination. Further supporting open knowledge, the Scientific Journals Coordination Unit (BİDEK) provides a public portal that aggregates all University-affiliated journals on DergiPark, ensuring free access to peer-reviewed publications.



Education Information System

DSpace'de Ara



The Sakarya University Continuing Education Application and Research Center (SAÜSEM) complements formal education by offering lifelong-learning programs open to the wider community. In 2024, SAÜSEM organized multiple certificate programs—both face-to-face and online—in social, cultural, scientific, economic, and technological fields (e.g., High-Performance Liquid Chromatography, Legal Profession Preparation, Intellectual Property Mediation, Public Oversight Training). These programs integrate theoretical and practical learning while upholding Sakarya University's academic quality standards.



**SAKARYA UNIVERSITY**  
Continuing Education Center

All faculties, departments, curricula, course contents, and materials uploaded by faculty members are publicly viewable on the University's Education Information System (EBS) without login credentials, enabling transparent access to academic course structures and syllabi. Besides, community engagement is also evident through the TOKAS Sustainability Platform, which organizes public training, awareness, and outreach events focused on sustainability and social contribution. The Institutional Activity Report 2024 documents numerous public academic and cultural activities—seminars, conferences, and exhibitions—open to external participants.



**SAKARYA ÜNİVERSİTESİ**

**TOKAS**

TOPLUMA KATKI VE SÜRDÜRÜLEBİLİRLİK KOORDİNATÖRLÜĞÜ

Collectively, these initiatives demonstrate Sakarya University's comprehensive commitment to public access, encompassing physical spaces, digital repositories, open educational materials, and lifelong-learning opportunities.

### **Public Events and Community Engagement**

At Sakarya University, public events such as trainings, seminars, conferences, and social education programs are organized by both academic and administrative units. In alignment with the University's Strategic Plan, all departments set explicit objectives to conduct scientific and educational activities that benefit society. The Turgut Özal Culture and Congress Center and various multipurpose halls are regularly used not only for university events but also to host community-oriented gatherings organized by external institutions.



In 2024, Sakarya University continued to serve as an open hub for public education, cultural enrichment, scientific collaboration, and community engagement. University halls, the Turgut Özal Culture and Congress Center, faculty conference venues, and student activity spaces were actively

used to host events accessible to both the university community and the wider public. These activities were publicly announced and documented across the institutional news and events platforms, demonstrating transparency and sustained outreach.



Throughout the year, the University held a broad range of scientific and academic events that encouraged public dialogue and professional development. The Youth Conference – “Türkiye Yüzyılı, Gençliğin Yüzyılı” brought together scholars, policymakers, and young participants to discuss the role of youth in Türkiye’s future. RAConf24 – Cybersecurity Summit gathered national cybersecurity experts, professionals, and learners, contributing to digital competency-building. International academic collaboration was strengthened through the 4th International Communication Sciences Symposium (ICOMS) and the 4th International Symposium on Characterization, both of which welcomed researchers from various fields and countries. Additionally, UKAY 2024 – National Solid Waste Management Congress advanced public awareness on environmental sustainability and waste management policy.



Cultural and artistic activities also played a central role in community engagement. Events such as Bayat-i Mevlevi Ayni-i Şerifi & Sema Mukabelesi and Segâh Mevlevi Ayini introduced audiences to Sufi ceremonial traditions and classical music heritage. Performances including “Ziyafet Sofrası” and “Çoruh’tan Kaçkarlar’a Artvin Türküleri” supported cultural continuity and highlighted regional artistic expression. Intellectual and commemorative programs such as “İbn Sina’da Doğa Kavramı” Seminar and the Prof. Dr. Faruk Beşer Commemoration created platforms for philosophical engagement and collective memory.





Community service and social responsibility initiatives were coordinated by multiple university units. The TOKAS Sustainability Platform organized the Science, Culture, Art and Sustainability Festival, promoting interdisciplinary learning and public sustainability literacy. The University also celebrated National GIS Day, contributing to public awareness of geographic information systems and spatial data technologies. The Cultural Directorate's Hospital School Project 2024 brought educational, artistic, and psychosocial activities to hospitalized children, illustrating applied outreach and care in practice. Meanwhile, the Student Culture and Sports Directorate (SKS) facilitated diverse arts, sports, and cultural events, fostering community well-being and participation.



Alongside these activities, SAÜSEM – the Continuing Education Center continued to offer open-access certification programs, including Micro MBA, Trainer Training Certificate, Payroll and Social Security Practices, and Brand Representation Exam Preparation Programs. These programs supported lifelong learning and workforce development for individuals outside the formally enrolled student population.



Taken together, the events and initiatives implemented throughout 2024 demonstrate Sakarya University's strong, systematic, and inclusive commitment to public engagement. By offering accessible educational, cultural, scientific, and community-oriented programs, the University reaffirms its role as a regional and national center for shared knowledge, cultural vitality, and sustainable social development.

### **Public Vocational and Professional Training**

Sakarya University provides access to educational resources and lifelong learning opportunities for individuals who are not formally enrolled at the university by offering diverse training programs, public workshops, and open-access educational activities. Through the Continuing Education Center (SAÜSEM), the TOKAS Sustainability Platform, and the University Career Development Center, the institution systematically organizes and delivers vocational, technical, and professional development programs throughout the year—demonstrating a strong commitment to lifelong education and community inclusion.

Sakarya University, as part of a Council of Higher Education (YÖK)–led initiative, has established a Science Communication Office to connect academic knowledge with society. In 2024, the Office organised a series of public science talks, including “Earthquakes in Türkiye and Lessons Learned,” “Safe Food = Healthy Tomorrows,” and “Who Teaches—Human or Machine? Who Is in the Classroom of the Future?”



In 2024, Sakarya University implemented a wide range of publicly accessible professional and vocational training activities designed for working adults, job seekers, and the wider community. These included both online and on-campus programs advertised openly through official news feeds and event calendars, with transparent application procedures and certification upon completion. At SAÜSEM, numerous certificate and skills-based courses were made available to external participants, including: Micro MBA Certificate Program (management and leadership training), Trainer Training Certificate Program, Payroll and Social Security Procedures Training, HPLC (High-Performance Liquid Chromatography) Certificate Program (Dec 2024 – Jan 2025), Diction Certificate Program (face-to-face,



28–29 Dec 2024), 4–6 Age Child Education & Activities Certificate Program (distance learning), Zeka Oyunları (Mind Games) Instructor Training Course, Regulatory and Exam-Preparation Courses such as Public Oversight Institution Distance Training, etc. Additionally, SAÜSEM continued to deliver short-term professional skills modules in time management, communication, and compliance practices, each awarding verifiable certificates of completion to successful participants.



In 2024, aligned with MSCA’s European Researchers’ Night, Sakarya University led the Science & Future programme, staging simultaneous public-engagement events on 27 September across Sakarya, Kocaeli, and Düzce (Science & Future; European Researchers’ Night — Sakarya University 2024). The programme is embedded in a year-round pipeline, including 2024 “Researchers at School” visits, with published programmes, photos, and news items that document reach and participation (2024 School Visits; Media Coverage). Cross-sector partnerships—with provincial governorates, the Kocaeli Provincial Directorate of National Education, and Türkiye Vakıflar Bankası T.A.O.—and coordination among three universities underscore scalability and regional breadth (Kocaeli University 2024; Düzce University 2024). In 2024, 88 researchers took part, and engagements reached more than 10,000 people across the region, providing clear evidence of impact through heightened public awareness. Together, these activities advance MSCA objectives by widening access to science, strengthening science literacy, and sustaining researcher–society dialogue.

The TOKAS Sustainability Platform hosted thematic micro-credential and vocational trainings supporting sustainable development and gender equality, including the Women in Business Micro-Credential Program (Modules I & II, 4–12 May 2024) at the *TEKNOKENT* Incubation Center, covering leadership, communication, and project management; the Aromatherapy Basic Approach Training (31 May 2024, online); and the Violence Prevention Strategies training (12 December 2024) focused on workplace and community awareness.



Meanwhile, the University Career Development Center organized several open professional-development events such as the CV Preparation & Interview Art Workshop (15 October 2024) and LinkedIn Training and Kampüste Suwen Var professional networking event (November–December 2024), which strengthened employability and digital communication skills among students and external participants. As part of the collaboration between Sakarya University and Akyazı State Hospital, staff psychologist Murat Erdem delivered professional training for hospital personnel on Effective Communication, Dealing with Difficult People, Anger Management, and Stress Management.

Moreover, university media reported community-oriented short courses such as the Basic Turkish Sign Language Course and Artificial Intelligence Summer School, which were open to the general public and regional stakeholders.



Collectively, these 2024 initiatives illustrate Sakarya University's strong, institution-wide commitment to lifelong learning, vocational upskilling, and public accessibility, offering both short courses and structured certificate programs that address managerial, technical, and social skills development beyond formal degree education.

## Campus Educational & Community Outreach

At Sakarya University, social aid and educational outreach activities beyond the campus are implemented through student communities and university units dedicated to social contribution and learning. These activities—conducted under the university’s community contribution and lifelong learning framework—include support for surrounding villages, donations of educational and financial materials, theater performances for children, inclusive games and creative sessions for students with special needs, establishment of local libraries, and food-aid initiatives. The university supports these community-driven efforts both financially and by providing materials, logistics, and supervision.

Throughout 2024, Sakarya University extended education and social engagement beyond its campus by collaborating with local schools, hospitals, and social care institutions to deliver community-oriented outreach. University departments, TOKAS, and volunteer student groups conducted recurring educational and enrichment sessions in off-site public venues, combining science, art, sustainability, and cultural learning in practical and inclusive ways.



A key example was the Hospital School Project, coordinated by the Cultural Directorate (SKS), in partnership with the Sakarya Training and Research Hospital. University volunteers organized multiple visits throughout the year to the pediatric oncology and hematology wards, where they delivered engaging educational and creative activities. These included hands-on science demonstrations (Van de Graaff and Tesla coil electricity experiments, solar observation through telescopes, volcano and lava-lamp projects, and DNA extraction from bananas), as well as music performances, origami and animation workshops, and theater performances designed to promote joy, curiosity, and learning among hospitalized children.





In parallel, projects under the title 'Sevgiye Engel Yok / Sevgide Engel Yok' brought university students together with children and individuals with special needs at public rehabilitation and day-care centers affiliated with the Provincial Directorate of Family and Social Services. These sessions involved arts and crafts, science games, nutrition awareness, and social inclusion activities, reinforcing empathy and volunteerism among university participants.



Beyond these recurring initiatives, TOKAS (Sustainability Platform) organized awareness sessions and community trainings such as the 'Energy Conservation Week Education' and the 'Zero Waste Management Seminar within the Framework of Sustainable Schools', broadening outreach to teachers, families, and young learners across the region. Similarly, the 'Children on Campus' project invited primary school pupils for interactive science and cultural workshops, further bridging the gap between the university and the local community.



Throughout 2024, student communities at Sakarya University actively implemented community-oriented educational and social outreach programs in schools, hospitals, rehabilitation centers, and rural areas, in alignment with the university's mission of societal contribution and inclusive learning.

1) Health Literacy and Prevention Education: The Green Crescent Student Club, Social Work Student Club, and Health Sciences student associations delivered workshops for children and youth addressing healthy lifestyle awareness, digital balance, addiction prevention, and emotional self-regulation. These sessions strengthened health literacy, preventive coping behaviors, and youth empowerment. / Key Impact Terms: health literacy; preventive education; youth empowerment

2) Hospital-Based Education and Psychosocial Support: Through the Hospital School initiative, Social Work Student volunteers, Medical Faculty students, and Child Development communities facilitated year-round activities in pediatric units, including creative play, storytelling, and science demonstrations. These interactions supported both continuity of learning and emotional resilience for children undergoing long-term treatment. / Key Impact Terms: continuity of learning; hospital-based education; psychosocial support

3) Inclusive Learning for Individuals with Special Needs: Student groups focusing on special education, rhythm & movement, and social responsibility conducted sensory workshops, communication-based learning, rhythm-dance activities, and handicraft sessions in special education and rehabilitation centers. These initiatives promoted social participation, self-expression, and inclusive education for children and youth with diverse needs. / Key Impact Terms: inclusive education; special needs engagement; equal participation

4) Educational Support in Rural and Village Schools: Arts, Social Responsibility, Pedagogical Drama, and Engineering student communities carried out field visits to village schools, organizing creative arts workshops, playground and classroom improvements, mural painting, and mini-science experiments. These efforts enhanced educational equity, strengthened students' sense of belonging, and improved learning access in rural areas. / Key Impact Terms: rural learning access; community-based education; educational equity

5) Internationalization and Global Learning Mobility: The ESN (Erasmus Student Network) conducted outreach in high schools and university senior classes to inform students about Erasmus+ study opportunities and intercultural learning pathways, supporting widening participation in global

education and forward-looking academic planning. / Key Impact Terms: international mobility; widening participation; global citizenship

6) Cybersecurity and Digital Literacy Awareness: The Cybersecurity Student Club hosted public workshops on digital safety and basic information security practices, contributing to strengthened digital literacy and safe online behavior among youth and community members. / Key Impact Terms: digital literacy; cyber awareness; safe online behavior

7) Solidarity and Community Support Campaigns: Student organizations coordinated donation drives, scholarship fundraising, and book-clothing support campaigns to assist disadvantaged children and families, reinforcing a campus culture grounded in volunteerism, mutual solidarity, and community resilience. / Key Impact Terms: solidarity; volunteerism; community resilience

These activities—publicly documented through Sakarya University’s news, culture, and TOKAS platforms—demonstrate continuous, multi-domain societal engagement, directly supporting the university’s strategic objectives in lifelong learning, inclusive community development, and social contribution.

### **Non-Discriminatory Access and Equality Policy**

Sakarya University has adopted formal, legally binding policies that guarantee equal access to all academic, cultural, and social activities for every individual, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, disability, refugee status, or gender. These commitments are rooted in institutional regulations, national higher education ethics principles, and the university’s Sustainable University Policy, which explicitly mandates that all services and activities be carried out without discrimination and remain open to all members of society.

At the policy level, the Social Equality Regulation forms the cornerstone of this framework. It identifies equality as a core institutional principle and rejects all forms of direct or indirect discrimination or restriction based on sex, ethnic origin, religion, or disability. It further mandates that the applications of students with disabilities be taken seriously, ensures that no exclusion occurs on ethnic or religious grounds, and requires gender equality to be observed in every field of university life. The regulation also stipulates awareness-raising seminars and training on equality and inclusion.

Complementing this, the Lifelong Learning Access Policy reinforces the principle that all university activities—such as recruitment, admissions, promotions, participation in events, and appointments—must operate under full equality and fairness. This approach extends Sakarya University’s educational and outreach services to the broader public, guaranteeing that lifelong learning, professional training, and community engagement remain accessible to all.

In line with national legislation, Sakarya University also abides by the Higher Education Institutions’ Ethical Behaviour Principles, which establish the duty of universities to respect human dignity and equality, and to prevent discrimination on the basis of language, religion, race, gender, or disability. The University’s internal Ethics Committee Guidelines further secure these rights by authorizing investigations in cases of discriminatory behavior or hate crime within the institution.



In addition to these core frameworks, the University's Sustainability (SDG) Portal publicly lists complementary policies that reinforce accessibility and equal opportunity, including: Discrimination Policy, Measures Against Discrimination, Student Access Policies, and Employment and Personnel Policies. SAÜ Gender of equality is further institutionalized through the Gender Equality Plan (2022–2025), approved by the University Senate and publicly monitored. For disability inclusion, the Barrier Free Lane and Support Coordination Office and the Disability Services Office provide structured support services, accessibility audits, and adaptive resources. These are reinforced by SKS's published Service Standards, which detail procedures for ensuring barrier-free participation in university life.

Through these combined mechanisms—regulatory, ethical, and operational—Sakarya University demonstrates a comprehensive and systemic commitment to non-discrimination, inclusivity, and universal access in every aspect of education, employment, and social participation.





## SDG 5. GENDER EQUALITY

**5** GENDER  
EQUALITY



## **Measurement & Tracking of Access for Women**

Sakarya University systematically measures and tracks women's access to higher education and academic success through an institutional framework grounded in its Gender Equality Plan (2022–2025). This Senate-approved plan establishes a structured mechanism for monitoring gender equality across all academic units and explicitly commits the institution to ensuring equal opportunities in applications, admissions, participation, and graduation.

The University's Sustainability (SDG) website provides dedicated sections for 'Measurement/Tracking of Women's Likelihood of Graduating' and 'Student Access Measures,' both confirming that gender-disaggregated monitoring is conducted annually. These pages note that women consistently demonstrate higher and faster graduation rates than men. Gender data are collected centrally by the Student Selection and Placement Center (ÖSYM) at the application stage, and after placement, Sakarya University receives gender-disaggregated enrolment data to monitor the distribution of admitted students.

At the institutional level, the SABİS 'About SAU' statistical dashboards publicly report: (i) the overall female/male student ratio (52% women, 48% men in 2023, showing consistent balance); (ii) programme-level student numbers with gender breakdowns; (iii) new entrants (admissions/enrolments) by year and programme; and (iv) graduation totals disaggregated by gender. These datasets collectively enable continuous tracking of women's participation and completion rates. Additional programme-level gender data are accessible through YÖK Atlas, where fields such as Medicine, International Relations, Data Science & Analytics, and Information Systems Engineering display variable but transparent gender distributions.

In 2024, Sakarya University also advanced gender equality through action-oriented initiatives under its Gender Equality Plan. Notably, the 'Women in Business Micro-Credential Program' was launched as one of the first structured workforce-readiness micro-credential schemes for women in Türkiye, directly reinforcing the University's gender equity objectives. Similarly, the 'Women in Climate Justice' symposium (2024) and female-focused employability events organized by the Career Development Center strengthened gender awareness and opportunity across academic and community contexts.

Although gender data at the application stage remain centrally managed by ÖSYM and are not disaggregated in public university sources, Sakarya University systematically monitors gender equality at the enrolment and completion stages. This integrated evidence — spanning policy, sustainability documentation, statistical reporting, and gender-focused initiatives — demonstrates an institutionalized, data-driven commitment to promoting and tracking women's access, participation, and success across all educational levels.

## **Applications & Admissions Policy**

In 2024, Sakarya University (SAU) maintained clear institutional policies and active practices ensuring non-discriminatory access for women at every stage of the application, admission, and participation processes. The Sustainable University Policy explicitly guarantees that all services and activities are delivered under equal conditions to all individuals, regardless of gender. This principle is reinforced by

Senate-approved Undergraduate, Associate and Postgraduate Education Regulations, which mandate equal treatment in admissions, enrolment, and educational opportunities.

At the national level, Türkiye's Council of Higher Education (YÖK) introduced a policy in 2023 establishing special quotas for women aged 34 and above in associate and undergraduate programs at state universities, including Sakarya University. This affirmative measure, still active in 2024, expanded access for mature women learners. Institutionally, SAU's Social Equality Regulation defines equality as a fundamental value and prohibits any direct or indirect discrimination based on sex, ethnicity, religion, or disability—including in student admissions.

The Sustainability (SDG) portal publicly presents the University's Student Access, Student Access Measures, Student Access Policies, and Discrimination Policy, which together outline the framework ensuring gender-neutral access and participation. These pages confirm that gender data at the application stage are collected centrally by ÖSYM (Student Selection and Placement Center), and that SAU monitors the gender distribution of admitted students and graduation outcomes via its SABİS dashboards. The Gender Equality Plan (2022–2025), approved by the Senate and publicly accessible, formalizes the University's commitment to promoting gender equity and tracking women's access and outcomes across all academic units.

In 2024, SAU operationalized these commitments through tangible initiatives such as the Women in Business Micro-Credential Program (Modules I & II, May 2024), launched by the TOKAS Sustainability Platform to enhance women's employability and leadership skills. Complementary events like the Women in Climate Justice Symposium (2024) and women-focused career development activities organized by the Career Development Center further demonstrated SAU's sustained engagement in women's access and empowerment.

Together, these institutional frameworks, Senate decisions, national regulations, and public documentation provide robust evidence that a comprehensive, in-force policy guaranteeing women's applications and admissions on an equal basis was implemented and actively practiced at Sakarya University throughout 2024.

### **Women's Access Programs**

Sakarya University (SAU) maintains a comprehensive institutional approach to women's empowerment and access, combining research, policy, mentoring, scholarships, and dedicated training opportunities. The Women's Studies Application and Research Center (SAÜKAM) leads academic and applied research on issues that concern women and develops policies to strengthen women's participation and leadership in society. Within SAÜKAM, studies are conducted to identify areas where women remain under-represented and to enhance women's orientation in these fields.

Complementing this, Sakarya Teknokent and its Incubation Center provide education, mentorship, and entrepreneurship infrastructure for women founders. Female entrepreneurs are supported to establish start-ups or business units within the *TEKNOKENT*, benefiting from access to facilities, business training, and innovation networks.

At institutional level, the SAU Sustainability "Women's Progress" Hub documents the university's women-focused access mechanisms, including dedicated Women's Mentoring Schemes, Women's Access Schemes (entrepreneurship support via *TEKNOKENT* and Incubation Center), Applications for

Encouraging Women, and non-discrimination and parental-support provisions such as childcare. The Sustainability Reports underline SAU's scholarship policy—prioritising low-income students and demonstrating that women applicants are more likely to receive scholarships. In addition, national measures such as the YÖK special quota for women aged 34 and over continued to apply in 2024 and are cited on SAU's Student Access pages. These measures collectively remove social and financial barriers for women's participation.

Practice in 2024 is clearly evidenced through the “Women in Business” Micro-Credential Programme, run under the Geleceğİne Yön Veren Kadınlar Academy coordinated by TOKAS. This free, mentor-supported training targeted 3rd- and 4th-year female students and launched on 3 May 2024, with modules delivered on 4–5 May and 11–12 May, followed by a Project & Interview Simulation Workshop (15 May) and final session (22 May). Sessions were held with industry experts and academics at the *TEKNOKENT* Incubation Center. The programme was publicised via SAU News, TOKAS, and the SAU Events platform, and its learning outcomes and modules are formally embedded in the Education Information System (EBS) and Candidate Student Portal, confirming that it is part of SAU's official micro-credential catalogue.

Complementary women-focused initiatives reinforced this framework: SAU and faculty-level units promoted the “Geleceğİ Yazan Kadınlar – Artificial Intelligence” training (applications due 9 December 2024), expanding women's access to digital and AI skills; and a series of visibility and networking events—including the “Women in Legal Professions” panel (4 March 2024) and “Women in Climate Justice” symposium (13 May 2024)—provided mentoring, inspiration, and leadership examples for female students and staff.

In 2024, SAU worked with KADEM (Women and Democracy Association) and the SAU KADEM Youth chapter (Genç KADEM) to advance women-focused studies, education, and support on campus. Guided by the principle “Not one day, but every day,” SAU Genç KADEM marked Teachers' Day in November 2024, honouring SAU academics who educate future teachers and spotlighting women's leadership in education. Through KADEM-led outreach and peer support, women students benefited from guidance, solidarity networks, and values-based engagement that complements SAÜKAM's research and the University's mentoring and entrepreneurship pathways.

Together, these policies and actions demonstrate that Sakarya University in 2024 systematically provided women's access programs spanning research, mentoring, entrepreneurship support, financial aid, and sectoral empowerment—aligned with SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 4 (Quality Education).

### **Encouraging Women's Applications in Under-represented Fields**

Sakarya University (SAU) demonstrates a strong and consistent institutional commitment to encouraging women's applications in under-represented academic and professional fields, combining policy, research, mentorship, and multi-stakeholder collaboration. The Sakarya University Women's Studies Application and Research Center (SAÜKAM) identifies disciplines where women are a minority and works to increase women's orientation and participation in these areas. These efforts are complemented by national measures such as the Council of Higher Education (YÖK) special quota for women aged 34 and over, which has been in effect since 2023. In this context, SAU reserved such quotas for women in its 2024 Higher Education Institutions (YKS) preferences, ensuring fair access to

higher education for women returning to study. Quantitative baselines reinforce this commitment: women constitute 55% of SAU's undergraduate cohort—above Türkiye's national average—providing evidence of equitable access and countering narratives of gender-based exclusion. Women's representation among SAU staff likewise exceeds national averages, signalling progress across the academic pipeline.

Within its Sustainability Framework, SAU's "Women's Access Schemes" and "Applications for Encouraging Women" pages outline both institutional and collaborative mechanisms. SAÜKAM leads identification of minority areas, while *TEKNOKENT* and its Incubation Center provide entrepreneurship training and start-up support, establishing a clear pipeline from study choice to innovation and employment. SAU's "Student Access Measures" and "Student Access Policies" further document equitable access principles and integration of national quotas.

Concrete practice in 2024 included the Women in Business Micro-Credential Programme (Women Academy), jointly implemented by TOKAS (Social Contribution and Sustainability Office) and hosted at Sakarya *TEKNOKENT*'s Incubation Center. The free, women-only programme ran modules on 4–5 May and 11–12 May 2024, followed by a Project & Interview Simulation Workshop (15 May). It adopted a mentor-supported format, included published participation criteria (GPA  $\geq$  2.0; women-only), and issued certificates and digital badges. These activities prepared women students for leadership in male-dominated labour market sectors, particularly management and technology.

Beyond campus, SAU units promoted external and national opportunities designed to attract women to under-represented STEM and AI domains. In collaboration with Turkish industry and civic partners, several SAU faculties — including Business Administration (ISLF), Electrical and Electronics Engineering (EEE), and the Geography Department — amplified the "Geleceği Yazan Kadınlar – Artificial Intelligence" call (application deadline 9 December 2024). The Geography Department announcement explicitly referenced cooperation with the Sakarya Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SATSO), showing active community and industry partnership. Likewise, SAU's ARDEK Directorate disseminated information on the British Council Women in STEM Scholarships (2024–25), connecting women students to international funding and mobility opportunities.

The Career Center's 2024 Hub highlighted complementary programming — such as "Women Leaders in Management" — supporting aspiration building and confidence among women entering under-represented professional domains.

Together, these policies and practices demonstrate an integrated "policy-to-practice" approach by Sakarya University: combining institutional frameworks, mentoring and incubation partnerships, national and international scholarship promotion, and outreach campaigns to systematically encourage women's applications and advancement in fields where they remain under-represented.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy for Women**

In line with its Sustainable University Policy, Social Equality Regulation, and 2023–2027 Strategic Plan, Sakarya University (SAU) delivers all academic, administrative, and community services open to all members of society without any discrimination. All academic and administrative staff are employed



under the Civil Servants Law No. 657, which explicitly prohibits gender discrimination in public recruitment and employment. Within this legal framework, SAU's Human Resources Policy reinforces equal treatment by adopting an institutional commitment to non-discrimination against female employees.

In 2024, this principle was actively embedded across SAU's governance, access, and student support systems. The Sustainability Portal publishes a dedicated "Non-Discrimination Policies for Women" page affirming SAU's institutional policy of equality in recruitment and employment. This is operationalised through the "Student Access Policies" and "Student Access Measures," which guarantee equal conditions regardless of gender, describe gender-disaggregated monitoring of student registration, and document measures like the YÖK 34+ quota that improves access for women over the age of 34.

Furthermore, the "Lifelong Learning Access Policy" reiterates that all SAU services are open to the public without discrimination, reinforcing the principles of the Sustainable University Policy and Social Equality Regulation. The Senate-approved Gender Equality Plan (2022–2025) remained effective throughout 2024, serving as the overarching framework ensuring the prevention of gender-based discrimination and guiding equality actions across the university.

In 2024, SAU played an active role in the Sakarya Provincial Action Plan to Combat Violence Against Women (2021–2025), developed under Türkiye's Fifth National Action Plan. University representatives participated in monthly coordination meetings and co-implemented activities; within this framework, SAU hosted and supported International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women events, strengthening inter-institutional cooperation, prevention efforts, and awareness across campus and the wider community.

In practice, SAU implemented awareness and capacity-building initiatives during 2024 to sustain a safe, equitable, and inclusive environment for women. These included university-wide training programmes on family protection and preventing violence against women (July 2024), International Women's Day events (March 8, 2024), and additional well-being and mental health services coordinated through the Medico-Social Center. Collectively, these institutional frameworks, policies, and community actions demonstrate that SAU's non-discrimination policy for women was not only codified but actively implemented and monitored in 2024, ensuring equality of access, employment, and opportunity.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Sakarya University (SAU) maintains an explicit and publicly accessible non-discrimination policy for ever one, integrated across institutional governance, employment, and access frameworks. At SAU, no process exists that examines or questions individuals' sexual orientations or gender identities, nor are individuals required to declare them. The University's operations, recruitment, and educational access are governed by national and institutional frameworks that prohibit gender discrimination. Under Civil Servants Law No. 657, applicable to all public institutions, there is no gender-based distinction in the employment of permanent staff, academic personnel, or administrative workers. SAU's Sustainable University Policy, 2023–2027 Strategic Plan, and Social Equality Regulation collectively affirm this

principle and extend it to every area of university life, ensuring full and equal participation without prejudice.

SAU also integrates gender equality into its formal curriculum through a course titled “Gender and Equality Policies” . The course introduces core concepts and policy approaches to gender equality and supports students in recognising and addressing discrimination, aligning academic learning with the University’s institutional commitments to inclusion and equal opportunity.

SAU Personnel and Student Access pages integrate these standards into the University’s operational and human-resources systems. Employment practices explicitly reflect equality, and the YÖK Ethical Principles—a higher-education sector reference cited on SAU’s portal—confirm that no discrimination is permissible on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.

### **Maternity and Paternity Policies**

Sakarya University (SAU) maintains clear, legally grounded maternity and paternity policies aligned with Türkiye’s Civil Servants Law No. 657 and operationalized through the University’s Human Resources (HR) framework.

According to Law No. 657, all public employees—including those at Sakarya University—are entitled to comprehensive maternity and paternity benefits. Female employees have the right to paid maternity leave before and after childbirth (16 weeks total), followed by the option of up to two years of unpaid leave to care for their child. During the child’s first year, mothers are granted daily breastfeeding breaks—three hours per day for the first six months and one and a half hours per day for the following six months—with full flexibility regarding scheduling. Male employees are entitled to 10 days of paid paternity leave after the birth of a child.

These provisions are detailed in SAU’s HR Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page, which serves as the institutional guide for implementing national parental rights. The FAQ explains how Article 104 (maternity, paternity, breastfeeding leave) and Article 108 (unpaid parental leave) of Law No. 657 are applied across campus, ensuring that staff can access maternity, paternity, and family-related benefits transparently and equitably.

At the national level, these rights are anchored in Article 104 of the Civil Servants Law, publicly accessible through both the Ministry of Family and Social Services website and verified comparative legal repositories (Lexpera). Sakarya University complements this legal framework through its Gender Equality governance structure, which affirms the university’s institutional commitment to work–life balance, equal opportunity, and support for parenting responsibilities.

Beyond policy, the University actively promoted family well-being and parental awareness throughout 2024. Practice-level examples include: the TOKAS seminar on “Family Structure Protection and Strengthening” (16 May 2024), emphasizing family resilience and communication; the In-Service Training (HİEĞİTİM) Unit’s 2024 list, which included “Marriage and Family Life” training modules; and the “Family Issues” training session (14 October 2024), designed to enhance family communication and support mechanisms within the university community.

In addition, SAÜSEM (Continuing Education Center) provided certified programs that indirectly reinforce a parent-supportive ecosystem—such as 4–6 Age Child Education and Activities and Values Education Instructor Training—which align with early childhood development and family values education.

Together, these legal entitlements, HR practices, and educational initiatives demonstrate that Sakarya University’s maternity and paternity policies were codified, implemented, and complemented by family-oriented institutional culture in 2024.

### **Student/Staff-Accessible Childcare Facilities**

Sakarya University (SAU) publicly lists “Facilities for Childcare” among its official Student Access resources, as part of its Sustainability and access governance framework. The Sustainability page on childcare explains the existence of an on-campus kindergarten and references the SAU Foundation Schools; the Personnel page likewise reiterates that a campus kindergarten operates for staff with preschool-age children. These facilities continued in 2024. These statements evidence a formal, institutional childcare infrastructure located on or affiliated with campus.

The Student Access overview, Measures, and Policies pages consistently include childcare as one of the support mechanisms ensuring inclusive participation for members of the University community, reinforcing the role of childcare as an access enabler. In addition, the Maternity and Paternity Policies page (aligned with Law No. 657, regulating maternity, paternity, and breastfeeding entitlements) situates childcare within the broader parental-support ecosystem.

Having childcare facilities, SAU provides family-friendly learning and engagement spaces. The University Library opened a dedicated Children’s Library (announced on 9 August 2023) and continued to run children-focused activities throughout 2024–2025. The continuity of this service is documented in the Library’s 2024 Administrative Report and further confirmed by active programming on the Children’s Library Instagram account (including posts dated 31 December 2024). The Children’s Library’s Instagram account contains some event series, and the ongoing availability of the Children’s Library and the childcare references within Student Access pages together demonstrate that SAU sustains an environment supportive of both students and staff with family responsibilities.

Overall, the 2024 evidence confirms that childcare and family-friendly facilities were maintained and visible on campus. The institutional documentation and continuing practice indicate a family-inclusive campus that enables study continuity for new mothers and parents.

### **Women’s Mentoring Programs**

In 2024, Sakarya University (SAU) maintained a clear, in-force policy and practice framework supporting women-focused mentoring. The University’s Sustainability portal hosts a dedicated “Women’s Mentoring Schemes” page, which explicitly states that “at least 10% of female students participate” in these programmes. The schemes are coordinated by the Women’s Studies Application and Research Center (SAUKAM), which also identifies fields where women are underrepresented and works to increase women’s orientation toward those disciplines. This mentoring policy is clustered

with the Student Access, Student Access Measures, and Student Access Policies pages, forming part of SAU's equality and inclusion framework.

Implementation in the 2024 calendar year is evidenced through the "Women in Business" Micro-Credential Programme (also referred to as the Women Academy), coordinated by TOKAS and hosted at SAU *TEKNOKENT*'s Incubation Center. The programme ran on 4–5 May and 11–12 May 2024, with a mentor-supported format that included a Project & Interview Simulation Workshop on 15 May 2024. Official calls, participation requirements (female-only, GPA  $\geq$  2.0), and event reports were published through SAU News, TOKAS, and the SAU Events platform.

Beyond this flagship programme, SAU sustained a wide range of women-focused mentoring and leadership initiatives in 2024. These included activities such as the "Women Leaders in Management" events on the Career Center 2024 hub, and SAUKAM-coordinated sessions supporting women's empowerment and protection: "Ailenin Korunması ve Kadına Yönelik Şiddetin Önlenmesi" training (23 July 2024), delivered with Sakarya Bar Association lawyers; "Kadın ve Aile Dostu Kent Çalıştayı" (4 June 2024); "İklim Adaletinde Kadın Sempozyumu" (13 May 2024); "Hukuk Mesleklerinde Kadın" panel (4 March 2024); TÜBİTAK-supported education for women's cooperatives on Law No. 6284 (2024); and the "Türkiye Yüzyılında Yönetimde Kadın Liderler" symposium (19 December 2024), organised by TOKAS. Collectively, these policy documents and activities confirm that in 2024 SAU maintained both the  $\geq$ 10% women's mentoring policy and an active ecosystem of mentor-supported training, leadership, and empowerment programmes coordinated across SAUKAM, TOKAS, and the Career Center.

### **Tracking Women's Graduation Rate**

Sakarya University (SAU) maintains structured mechanisms to measure and monitor the graduation outcomes of women compared to men, aligning with its gender equality and sustainability governance. The University's Sustainability and Student Access framework confirms that, during and after registration, SAU tracks the male–female distribution of students, study durations, and completion (graduation) rates through institutional information systems.

A dedicated page, "Measurement/Tracking of Women's Likelihood of Graduating," explicitly states that the University monitors education periods and graduation rates of male and female students, noting that women's graduation time is shorter and their graduation rates higher than men's. This commitment is further reflected on the SAU news page, which outlines programmes to measure and monitor women's likelihood of graduating and to close potential gaps in completion outcomes.

Beyond these Sustainability pages, SAU's Gender Equality Plan (2022–2025)—approved by the University Senate and implemented annually by SAUKAM and SESAM—sets out governance measures to monitor and improve gender equality in education and employment. SAU also publicly shares gender-disaggregated student composition and graduation data on its "By the Numbers" (Sayılarla SAÜ) statistics page, reporting the female student share (Kız Oranı) and total graduate numbers. Complementarily, the Alumni Relations Coordination Office maintains contact and data exchange with graduates, enabling longitudinal tracking of career and education outcomes.

Together, these sources demonstrate that in 2024 SAU actively tracked women's graduation outcomes, maintained the institutional capacity and commitment to monitor gender gaps, and implemented a Senate-approved governance plan to ensure continuous equality oversight—even though a public dataset explicitly splitting graduation rates by gender was not published online.

### **Policies Protecting Those Reporting Discrimination**

Sakarya University (SAU) maintains clear and published policies to protect individuals who report discrimination or disadvantage arising from education or employment. Within the University's Quality Management Information System (KYS), employees and students can submit all requests and complaints anonymously, without the need to disclose their identity. All complaints are managed according to the ISO 10002 standard and the Service Recipients' Satisfaction Policy, which has been in effect since 2015. Through this system, individuals may directly forward their concerns to the relevant department head, dean's office, or rector's office.

If a complainant experiences disadvantage as a result of their report—or for any related reason—they are protected under the disciplinary regulation, and an investigation is initiated under the higher-education disciplinary procedures. At Sakarya University, such investigations are handled confidentially under the coordination of the Legal Consultancy Office. This internal protection mechanism is complemented by SAU's broader equality and non-discrimination governance. The Sustainability Portal's "Policy Against Discrimination from Educational or Employment Disadvantage" page reiterates the same protection and confidentiality principles. The Student Access Measures and Policies pages establish equality in access and monitoring, while the Social Equality Regulation explicitly prohibits all forms of discrimination (including on the basis of sex and gender identity) and prescribes disciplinary sanctions.

Practice-level implementation during 2024 further demonstrated this institutional culture of safety and accountability. SAU conducted university-wide trainings on preventing violence against women, in cooperation with the Sakarya Bar Association, under the coordination of the Women's Studies Application and Research Center (SAUKAM) and TOKAS (Social Contribution and Sustainability Office). These initiatives strengthened awareness and encouraged safe reporting pathways across academic and administrative units.

Collectively, these structures, policies, and 2024 practices confirm that Sakarya University had active, confidential, and ISO-compliant systems to protect those reporting discrimination, integrated into both its quality management and sustainability governance frameworks.



# SDG 6. CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

**6** CLEAN WATER  
AND SANITATION





## Water Consumption

Sakarya University systematically measures the total volume of water used across its entire campus, covering both treated mains water and groundwater extracted from on-site wells.

- **Water Sources:**

All buildings on campus are connected to the Sakarya Water and Sewerage Administration (SASKİ) mains network, which supplies treated municipal water. In addition, groundwater from the university's wells is extracted, treated on-site to drinking-water standards, and distributed through fountains and taps located across the campus. This treated natural spring water is primarily used for drinking, landscape irrigation, and cleaning purposes.



SASKİ-connected treated water distribution plant ensuring safe potable water for all users.

- **Metering and Monitoring:**

Each campus building—including academic, administrative, residential, and cafeteria facilities—is equipped with SASKİ-certified digital meters that record water consumption. Groundwater extraction wells are also fitted with separate flow meters. The Department of Construction and Technical Works collects and consolidates these readings monthly, and the total annual consumption is reported as part of the university's sustainability records.



Pipelines and tanks storing groundwater for irrigation; flow meters monitor extracted water volume.

- **Purpose and Data Use:**

Water consumption data are analyzed to identify leaks, optimize irrigation schedules, and plan conservation initiatives. The data feed directly into Sakarya University's Zero Waste and Water Conservation Program, aligned with national environmental regulations.

- **Verification:**

All metering devices are periodically calibrated by SASKİ to ensure accuracy. Annual consumption totals are verified against utility bills and internal reports.

These measures ensure that the university comprehensively monitors all treated and extracted water sources, allowing precise reporting and effective management of total campus water consumption.



Free drinking-water fountains supplied by treated spring water within campus



## Water Reuse

### 6.4.2. Water Reuse Measurement and Management System

#### 1. Overview

Sakarya University systematically monitors and quantifies water reuse to promote sustainable resource management. Reused water includes rainwater, spring water, and treated wastewater collected and distributed across campus for irrigation, cleaning, and other non-potable uses.

#### 2. Water Reuse Sources and Infrastructure

- **Rainwater Collection:** Rooftop and surface drainage systems direct rainwater to underground storage tanks located near main campus buildings.
- **Treated Wastewater:** Effluent from the Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality wastewater treatment plant is reused for irrigating forested and landscaped areas.
- **Groundwater Wells:** Non-potable groundwater is pumped for cleaning operations and green space irrigation, reducing dependence on mains water



**Figure 1. Rainwater Collection Channels**

*Rooftop and surface gutters directing stormwater into collection tanks.*

### 3. Measurement and Data Collection

- **Flow Meters:** Each reuse source (rainwater, treated wastewater, and well water) is equipped with a digital flow meter.
- **Monitoring Unit:** The Department of Construction and Technical Works (Yapı İşleri Daire Başkanlığı) collects monthly readings from all meters.
- **Annual Consolidation:** Data are compiled into the university's annual sustainability report, where the total reused volume and reuse ratio (%) are recorded.
- **Verification:** Meter readings are cross-checked with municipal records (SASKİ) and internal audits for consistency.





**Figure 2. Flow Meter Installation**

*Digital flow meters installed to record reused water volumes from storage systems.*

#### **4. Water Reuse Applications**

- **Irrigation:** All landscape and green areas are irrigated using reused rainwater, treated wastewater, or groundwater.
- **Cleaning:** Campus roadways and outdoor facilities are cleaned exclusively using non-potable reused water.
- **Ecosystem Support:** Reused rainwater is occasionally redirected to natural drainage channels to sustain small local vegetation areas and provide drinking sources for stray animals.



**Figure 3. Irrigation Using Reused Water**

*Reused treated wastewater and rainwater distributed to campus greenery through automated systems.*

## **5. Results and Ongoing Improvement**

- Reused water accounts for a significant portion of the campus's non-potable consumption.
- Continuous upgrades are planned to expand collection systems and integrate new monitoring sensors.
- The reuse program is evaluated annually under the Zero Waste and Sustainability Action Plan, contributing to long-term water conservation goals.
- **Water Usage and Care**
- **6.3.1 – Wastewater Treatment Process**
- Sakarya University operates under a comprehensive wastewater management framework in collaboration with the Sakarya Water and Sewerage Administration (SASKİ). All wastewater generated on campus is directed to the municipal sewage system and treated at the SASKİ Wastewater Treatment Plant in full compliance with the Water Pollution and Control Regulation issued by the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change.
- To reduce contamination before discharge, the university has installed oil and sediment filters in cafeterias, laboratories, and service areas. The Department of Construction and Technical Works conducts regular inspections and reports to SASKİ to verify the proper functioning of wastewater collection, treatment, and discharge systems.





**Figure 1. Wastewater Treatment Collaboration**

*Overview of the SASKi municipal wastewater treatment process where all Sakarya University effluent is treated according to national discharge standards.*

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- **6.3.2 – Pollution Prevention Measures**
- The university enforces multiple safeguards to prevent pollution incidents and the discharge of untreated wastewater into the environment. Separate drainage systems for wastewater and stormwater exist across all campus buildings. Oil traps are installed in vehicle service zones and cafeterias, while laboratories are equipped with containment basins for hazardous liquid waste.  
Regular water-quality sampling is conducted jointly by SASKi and the Department of Environmental Engineering to detect contamination risks early. Emergency protocols are in place for chemical or accidental spills, and response teams are trained to minimize potential environmental impacts.



**Figure 2. Oil Filters Installed on Campus**

*Pretreatment system showing oil and grease interceptors in cafeteria and laboratory discharge lines to prevent pollution.*



**Figure 3. Water Quality Sampling and Monitoring by SASKi**  
*Regular inspections and water-quality sampling conducted by the Sakarya Water and Sewerage Administration to prevent contamination and ensure compliance with environmental standards.*

- **6.3.3 – Provision of Free Drinking Water**

- Sakarya University provides free and safe drinking water for all students, staff, and visitors throughout the campus. Natural spring water extracted from university wells is treated and distributed through a dedicated internal network connected to public fountains and indoor taps.

The water is regularly analyzed by SASKi and the Department of Environmental Engineering to verify that it meets national drinking-water standards. This system ensures continuous access to safe, free drinking water while minimizing the use of bottled water and supporting the university's sustainability and waste reduction goals.

- **6.3.4 – Water-Efficient Building Standards**

- Sakarya University applies national water-efficiency and sustainable construction standards in all new and renovated buildings. In line with the *Water Efficiency Regulation (2024)*, all new campus facilities include low-flow fixtures, dual-flush toilets, and sensor-controlled taps to minimize water use. Older buildings are progressively being retrofitted with these systems as part of the Zero Waste and Sustainability Action Plan. The Construction and Technical Works Department

reviews every new project for compliance with efficiency and conservation standards before approval.

- **6.3.5 Water-Efficient Landscaping and Drought-Tolerant Plants**
- Sakarya University designs and maintains its campus landscapes to minimize water consumption and promote sustainable water management. The campus vegetation includes drought-tolerant and low-maintenance species, primarily pine (*Pinus pinea*, *P. nigra*), cedar (*Cupressus sempervirens*), and native oak (*Quercus robur*, *Q. frainetto*), all adapted to Sakarya’s humid subtropical climate.
- Automated irrigation systems exclusively use groundwater and rainwater collected in underground storage tanks. No treated mains water is used for irrigation. In addition, permeable pavements, gravel paths, and grass-supported parking areas facilitate rainwater infiltration and reduce surface runoff, helping to recharge groundwater.
- These practices reduce overall water demand and support the long-term sustainability of campus green spaces.



**Water-Absorbing**  
Pavements  
to rainwater infiltration and reduce runoff.



**Figure 5. Drought-Tolerant Plants**  
Pine and cedar trees integrated into campus landscaping to reduce

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- Water in the Community
- **6.5.1 – Educational Opportunities for Local Communities**
- Sakarya University provides extensive educational opportunities for local communities to learn about sustainable water management. Through its *Sustainable Future Meetings* and *Science&Future* (Horizon Europe MSCA & Citizens) project, the university delivers seminars, school workshops, and hands-on activities on water efficiency, the water footprint, and sustainable irrigation. Faculty members from Environmental Engineering regularly visit schools to teach sustainable water use. In 2024, events such as "Su Verimliliği ve Su Ayak İzimiz" (World Water Day) and "Kamuda Tasarruf Tedbirleri Eğitimi" reached hundreds of participants, including students, teachers, and public employees. These outreach efforts strengthen community awareness of responsible water management.





- *Figure 1. Public education "Science&Future" events*
- **6.5.3 – Support for Water Conservation Off Campus**
- Sakarya University actively supports water conservation beyond its campus through partnerships with local authorities, schools, and NGOs. Within the *Science&Future* project, training activities in Sakarya, Düzce, and Kocaeli promoted sustainable water use and adaptation to climate change. Programs such as "Kamuda Tasarruf Tedbirleri Eğitimi" trained municipal staff on reducing water and energy waste, while community workshops raised awareness of the water footprint. The university's sustainability team also collaborates with regional institutions to share research outcomes on water reuse and wastewater management. These activities extend the university's environmental impact to the wider region.



- *Figure 2. Off-campus community training and awareness programs.*
- **6.5.4 – Sustainable Water Extraction Technologies**
- Sakarya University employs sustainable water extraction methods to support irrigation and cleaning while protecting groundwater resources. Natural springs and wells on campus supply non-potable water, regulated by digital meters and automatic pumping systems. Extraction volumes are adjusted according to rainfall and seasonal demand, ensuring that local aquifers are not overused. Collected water is stored in covered underground tanks and distributed through automated irrigation systems. These systems are periodically inspected and verified in cooperation with the Sakarya Water and Sewerage Administration (SASKİ). Through this controlled approach, the university minimizes its environmental footprint while ensuring long-term water sustainability.



*Figure 3. Campus springs*

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- **6.5.5 – Cooperation on Water Security**
- Sakarya University maintains strong cooperation with local, regional, and national authorities to enhance water security and sustainable management. The university collaborates closely with SASKİ on R&D, water quality monitoring, and reuse strategies. At the Test Bed Center, researchers develop pilot projects that model energy-water management systems in partnership with municipal agencies. Academics also contribute to national and international studies on water purification, including electrocoagulation and membrane technologies. Research outcomes are shared with public authorities and published globally, aligning with the UN's definition of water security. These collaborations promote resilient infrastructure, clean water access, and climate-adapted practices.



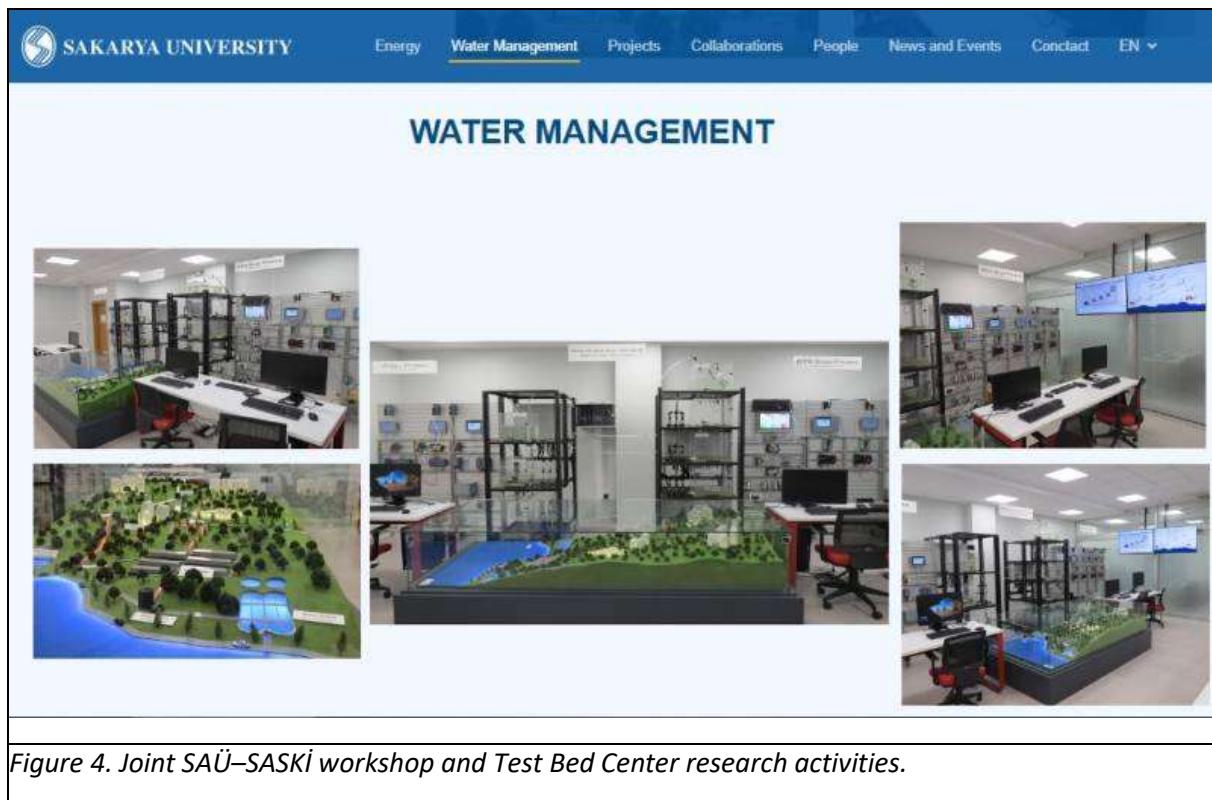


Figure 4. Joint SAÜ–SASKİ workshop and Test Bed Center research activities.

- **6.5.6 – Promoting Conscious Water Usage on Campus**
- Sakarya University fosters a strong campus culture of water awareness through infrastructure and education. Visual reminders encouraging water conservation are displayed in restrooms, labs, and cafeterias. Over 91% of fixtures—including automatic taps, dual-flush toilets, and waterless urinals—are water-efficient. Regular campaigns such as "Sürdürülebilir Gelecek Buluşmaları: Su Verimliliği ve Su Ayak İzimiz (Sustainable Future Meetings: Water Efficiency and Our Water Footprint)" engage students and staff in practical activities to reduce their water footprint. Digital meters track real-time consumption, and facility teams use this data to detect leaks and reduce waste. All new constructions follow green building standards to minimize water use.



- *Figure 5. Sustainable Future Meetings: Water Efficiency and Our Water Footprint event.*
- **6.5.7 – Promoting Conscious Water Usage in the Wider Community**
- Beyond campus, Sakarya University leads public awareness efforts on sustainable water use through seminars, exhibitions, and media engagement. Collaboration with SASKİ and local



schools ensures wide participation in events like World Water Day and Environmental Engineering Week. These programs feature lectures on household water savings, rainwater harvesting, and pollution prevention. Public campaigns and posters emphasize collective responsibility for clean water. Through outreach projects, research dissemination, and community partnerships, Sakarya University helps cultivate a regional culture of water consciousness and environmental stewardship.



*Figure 6. Public exhibitions and seminars promoting water awareness.*



# SDG 7. AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

**7** AFFORDABLE AND  
CLEAN ENERGY



## University Measures Towards Affordable And Clean Energy

Based on its Sustainable University Policy, Sakarya University commits to integrating the ecological, economic, and social dimensions of sustainability into its corporate practices and prioritizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The university's core energy policy aims to enhance energy efficiency through green campus initiatives and adopt responsible resource consumption to minimize the university's ecological impact.

### Energy Conservation

The university implements a plan with measurable targets, integrated with national policies, to ensure energy conservation.

**National Savings Plan:** The university operates within the framework of the "Savings Target and Implementation Guide for Public Buildings (2024–2030)," based on the Energy Efficiency Law No. 5627 and the Presidential Circular. This guide mandates a minimum energy savings target of 30% by 2030 for public buildings required to appoint an energy manager.

**Institutional Implementation:** To implement this target, an official letter (signed by the Vice-Rector) is sent to all university units, mandating sensitivity to energy conservation and maintaining indoor temperatures at 21°C.

**Management System:** To systematically improve energy performance, pre-assessment activities for the implementation of the ISO 50001 Energy Management System have been initiated via the SAUCO2 (Sustainable Carbon Tracking System) platform.

**Energy Management:** Building energy managers are appointed to promote energy savings, and these managers regularly monitor energy consumption.

### Raising Awareness

Raising awareness about energy efficiency and clean energy is among the university's primary responsibilities towards both its internal stakeholders and the community.

#### ***Local Community (Younger Generations and the Public):***

**Energy Efficiency Week:** Sakarya University Social Contribution and Sustainability Coordinatorship (TOKAS) provided training on energy savings to students at the Sakarya University Foundation Primary School.

**"Future's Return" Project:** Within the scope of the TÜBİTAK (The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye) 3005 program, 40 gifted students in the 7th and 8th grades were introduced to clean energy technologies on-site through technical trips to the ADASU Hydroelectric Power Plant (HES), Karaman Solar Power Plant (GES), and Pamukova Wind Power Plant (RES) in Sakarya.

#### ***Local Community (Staff):***

**Public Savings Training:** In-service training sessions titled "Energy Efficiency in Daily Life and Public Buildings," "Water Efficiency in Daily Life," and "Environment and Zero Waste" were provided to the

university's administrative staff. Additionally, relevant training modules have been defined in the online system to allow all staff to watch courses on the same subjects.

***Future Engineers (University Students):***

**SASKİ & ADASU HES Visit:** Sakarya University Electrical and Electronics Engineering students conducted a technical trip to the ADASU HES, which is operated by SASKİ (Sakarya Water and Sewerage Administration) and is the first HES in Türkiye built by a local government. The students inspected the facility, which generates 45 million kWh of electricity annually.

**SEDAŞ Technical Visit:** Faculty of Engineering students organized a technical visit to SEDAŞ (Sakarya Electricity Distribution Inc.) facilities to examine the energy distribution infrastructure, grid operations, and technology investments on-site.

**Academic Promotion and Awareness:** The Dean of Research has encouraged academics to participate in clean energy projects by disseminating announcements for international events such as the European Sustainable Energy Week 2024, the Clean Energy Transition Partnership (CET Partnership), and Tech4SmartCities.

Renewable Energy Sources

Sakarya University is committed to supporting 100% renewable energy.

**Renewable Energy Supply Ratio:** In 2024, the university's total annual electricity consumption was measured at 9,280,780.2 kWh. In contrast, the total amount of renewable energy supplied through on-site generation and I-REC certificates was 10,207,600 kWh. This proves that the university supplied 109.99% of the energy it consumed from renewable sources.

**International Certification (I-REC):** In 2024, the university supported its renewable energy generation, which exceeded its total consumption, with International Renewable Energy Certificates (I-REC). These certificates were obtained from the following sources:

Hydroelectric: 4,120 MWh

Solar Energy: 3,140 MWh

Wind Energy: 2,740 MWh









**Smart Buildings:** New buildings are equipped with energy management units and sensor devices (doors, lighting, flush toilets, faucets, etc.).

**Building Upgrade Plans:** Plans to upgrade existing buildings to higher energy efficiency are active. The 2024 activity report of the Sakarya University Department of Construction and Technical Works confirms that roof and facade insulation work has been carried out in various campus buildings, such as the Hendek Faculty of Education, the Congress Center, the Faculty of Health Sciences, the Mediko building, the Library, and the M7 building.

### **Sustainability in Procurement Processes**

Energy efficiency is central to the university's investment and procurement policies.

**Policy:** The university directs its energy investments towards renewable energy sources and prefers environmentally friendly materials and energy-efficient products (A+, A++, A+++) in its procurement processes. The procurement of energy-inefficient devices is prevented.

90% of the durable consumer goods on campus (white goods, air conditioners, laboratory equipment, etc.) consist of energy-efficient devices.

### **Collaboration**

The university actively collaborates with local, national, and international stakeholders on sustainable energy projects.

**Local/Regional:** Faculty members have supported regional strategy development by directly contributing to the preparation of the Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality's Sustainable Energy Action Plan. Furthermore, joint technical training sessions for students are organized with local infrastructure providers like SASKİ and SEDAŞ.

**National (Industry Collaboration):** The university conducts active R&D collaborations with national industrial organizations. The best example of this is the "100% Hydrogen-Fueled Boiler Design and Prototype Production" project, carried out in partnership with the Daikin Türkiye R&D department under the TÜBİTAK TEYDEB (Technology and Innovation Support Programs Directorate) 1505 University-Industry Cooperation Support Program. This initiative, led by Prof. Dr. Hüseyin Pehlivan, aims to develop a sustainable heating technology in the field of clean energy (hydrogen).

**National (Academic Collaboration):** Furthermore, a national-level academic collaboration was established with Istanbul University-Cerrahpaşa for the "Future's Transformation: Gifted Students and Renewable Energy" project, conducted under the TÜBİTAK 3005 program.

**International:** Prof. Dr. Hakan Serhad Soyhan was selected to represent Türkiye on the management committee of COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) Action CYPHER, which conducts European-wide research on green and sustainable energy production and fire safety.

### **Research and Development**

The university hosts over thirty research centers and more than ten R&D laboratories in the fields of energy efficiency and clean energy.

**Pioneering Centers and Student Innovation:** The Research and Development Application and Research Center (SARGEM) and the Sakarya Innovation Center (SAYMER) play a pioneering role in energy efficiency and renewable energy. Furthermore, the Sakarya University Advanced Technologies Application Community (SAITEM) develops innovative energy projects and leads initiatives such as the Sakarya Solar Car (SAGUAR), Sakarya Hydrogen Vehicle (SAHIMO), and Sakarya Solar Boat (SATEK). SAITEM has achieved various national and international successes by realizing Türkiye's first solar-powered boat project. In 2023, SAITEM designed the SAGUAR-RB (REBORN), its eighth solar vehicle, which participated in the Bridgestone World Solar Challenge in Australia. The SPARK Electric Vehicle Team participated in the TÜBİTAK Efficiency Challenge in 2023 and 2024.



*SAITEM Team – 2024 TÜBİTAK Efficiency Challenge Competition*

### **Energy Generation R&D**

**Floating Solar Energy System (FPV):** The TÜBİTAK 3501 project, led by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ceyda Aksoy Tırmıkçı, aims to install Türkiye's first small-scale floating photovoltaic (FPV) system on an irrigation pond in Sakarya.

**Hydrogen-Fueled Boiler Project (Industry Collaboration):** Within the scope of the TÜBİTAK TEYDEB (Technology and Innovation Support Programs Directorate) 1505 University-Industry Cooperation Support Program, the "100% Hydrogen-Fueled Boiler Design and Prototype Production" project is being carried out in partnership with the Daikin Türkiye R&D department. This initiative, led by Prof. Dr. Hüseyin Pehlivan, aims to develop an energy-efficient, environmentally friendly, and sustainable heating technology.

## Energy Storage R&D

**TÜBA-GEBİP Award:** Prof. Dr. Çetinkaya has been honored with the TÜBA-GEBİP (Outstanding Young Scientist Award) by the Turkish Academy of Sciences (TÜBA) for his outstanding research in the field of electrochemical energy storage. This prestigious national award, presented annually to Türkiye's leading young scientists, was conferred by the President of the Republic of Türkiye, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, in 2024.



Prof. Dr. Çetinkaya, TÜBA-GEBİP Award Ceremony, 2024.

**TÜBİTAK Projects:** Among the TÜBİTAK 1001 Research Projects accepted in 2024, several focus on advancing sustainable energy technologies and next-generation storage systems. These include Dr. Abdulkadir Kızılaslan's project, which aims to develop a prototype production line for high-energy-density lithium–sulfur pouch batteries using innovative solvent–binder pairs; Dr. Hasan Algül's research, which explores a green recycling process for lithium–ion batteries through ultrasonic, microwave, and anodic dissolution techniques; and Prof. Dr. Uğur Arifoğlu's project, which focuses on the design of a bidirectional, next-generation active battery management system to enhance energy efficiency and safety.

**2024 Patent Achievements:** The university's innovation power in energy storage was also proven by patents and awards received in 2024. The patent titled "Multi-Feed Lithium-Air Flow Battery Assembly" by Prof. Dr. Tuğrul Çetinkaya from the Research and Development Application and Research Center received a bronze medal at the 9th International Invention Fair (ISIF'24) in November 2024. Additionally, an international patent application (PCT/TR2024/051206) titled "Active Battery Management System fed from a Modified T-type Two-Way Converter" was filed on 18 October 2024 by Prof. Dr. Uğur Arifoğlu and Ümit Pekparlak on behalf of the Rectorate.



*The invention titled “Active Battery Management System Fed from a Modified T-Type Two-Way Converter”, developed by Prof. Dr. Uğur Arifoğlu, a faculty member of the Department of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, Sakarya University, and doctoral student Ümit Pekparlak, has been published in the Official Patent Bulletin.*

**Horizon Europe Project (FREE4LIB):** Sakarya University is a partner in the [FREE4LIB project](#), which is supported by the European Union Horizon Europe program with a budget of €9,283,175. The project, (also related to the "Spent LIB2SIB" project under the M-ERA.NET 2024 call), aims to develop sustainable processes at TRL 5-6 for recycling end-of-life lithium-ion batteries. Represented by Dr. Hasan Algül on behalf of the university, the project aims to contribute to the EU's circular economy goals by targeting the efficient recovery of metal oxides and metals.

#### **Policy Development R&D**

**EV Infrastructure Law:** Supported under the TÜBİTAK 1001 program, Asst. Prof. Dr. Emine Develi Ayverdi's project aims to create legal recommendations for national policy by examining the "**Legal Basis of Electric Vehicle Charging Stations from a Competition Law Perspective.**"

**Incentive Policies:** The master's thesis of Kerem Aydın, a student at the Institute of Social Sciences, examined Türkiye's transition process to renewable energy and the impact of incentive policies on investments, offering recommendations for increasing investment and strengthening public awareness.

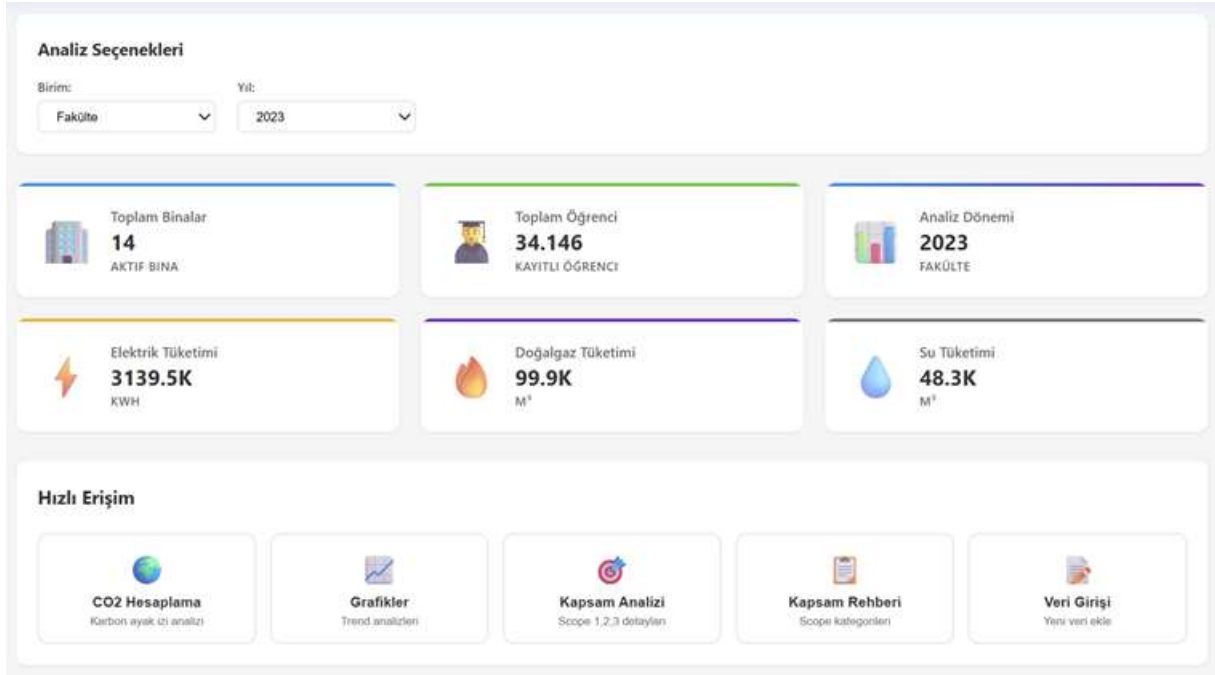
**Low-Carbon Innovation:** "BATTAI," an innovative battery startup by SAU student Mert Karakoç, reached the finals of ITU's "Enerjim Sensin" (You Are My Energy) entrepreneurship competition.



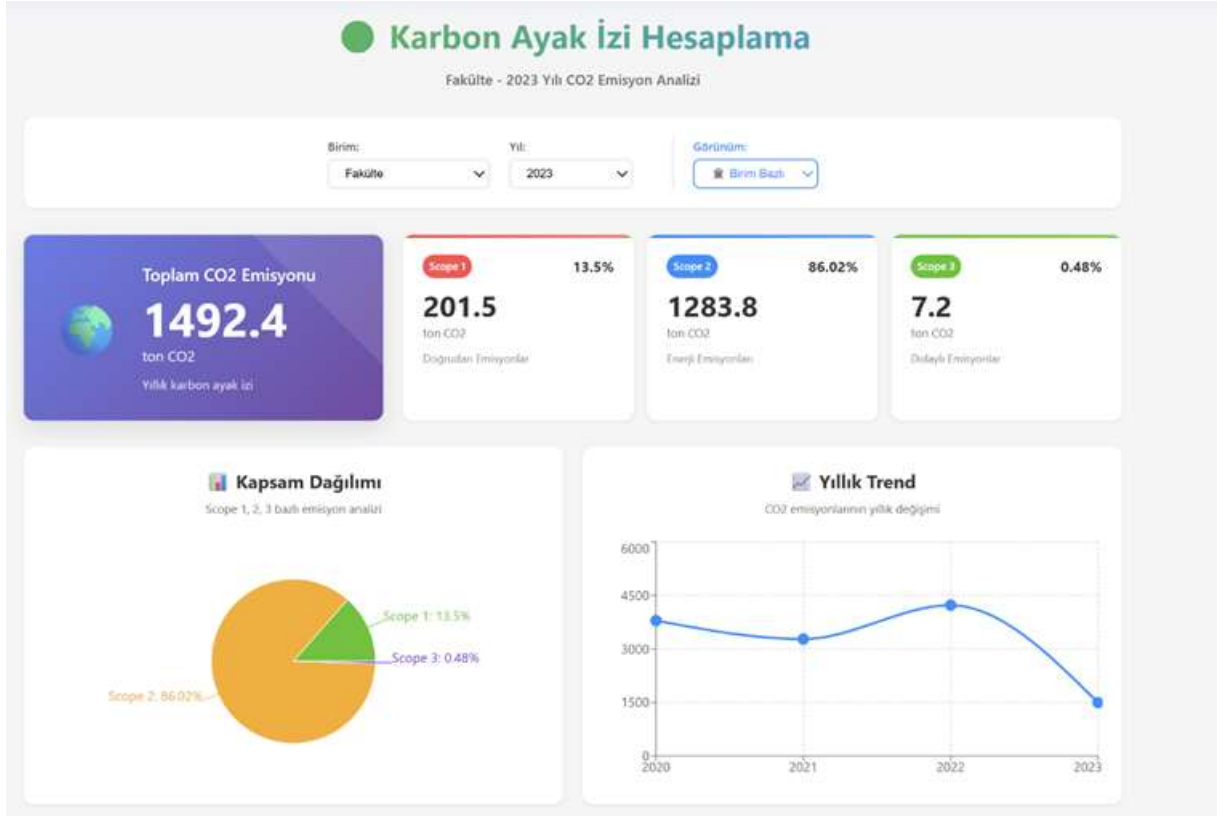
## Monitoring and Evaluation

The university uses annual monitoring and reporting mechanisms as well as advanced Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) based systems to ensure the effectiveness of its energy policies and to evaluate progress towards sustainability goals.

**ICT Platform (SAUCO2):** The university uses a specialized ICT platform called SAUCO2 (Sustainable Carbon Tracking System) to manage all these processes. This platform is designed for the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of programs related to energy management and climate change.



*Energy and Resource Monitoring Dashboard (SAUCO2 Platform) This interface displays faculty-level data on buildings, student population, and annual consumption of electricity, natural gas, and water within the Sustainable Carbon Tracking System (SAUCO2).*



*Carbon Footprint Analysis (SAUCO2 Platform), The SAUCO2 system calculates annual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by scope (1, 2, and 3) and visualizes emission trends to support data-driven sustainability planning.*

**Continuous Monitoring:** The university's energy management units continuously monitor and report on energy use. 85% of campus buildings have energy control and monitoring applications.

**Annual Reporting:** The university annually reports its energy consumption and carbon footprint data to assess performance in sustainable energy management.

**Carbon Footprint:** An annual carbon footprint calculation is performed. For 2024, the total carbon footprint was calculated as 1670 tons under Scope 1 + Scope 2 and 75 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e under Scope 3, according to the GHG Protocol.

### Energy Efficiency Practices

The university implements its energy policy through tangible practices across the campus.

**Lighting:** 85% of lighting fixtures use energy-saving LED technology.

**Appliances:** 90% of durable consumer goods (A+, A++, A+++) consist of energy-efficient devices.

**Water Efficiency:** In the area of water efficiency, which is directly related to energy conservation, the usage rate of water-efficient devices (aerated faucets, etc.) across the campus reached an average of 91% by the end of 2024.



### **Identifying Energy Wastage**

Energy reviews and continuous monitoring methods are used to identify areas with the highest energy wastage.

**ICT-Based Detection:** The SAUCO2 platform's "Graphs & Analytics" dashboard visualizes the "Top energy-consuming buildings."

**Targeted Action:** SAUCO2 identifies the buildings with the highest energy wastage, enabling performance monitoring and supporting targeted energy efficiency actions (e.g., insulation, appliance replacement).

**Continuous Monitoring:** The energy management units and the SAUCO2 system (via the Data Entry and Data List screens) continuously monitor consumption to detect waste and guide improvement efforts.

**Academic Input:** The Dean of Research organized a Horizon Europe Cluster 5 – Energy survey, gathering the opinions of university faculty members under the heading "efficient, sustainable energy use," adding an academic dimension to the identification of potential improvement areas.

### **Carbon Emission Reduction and Divestment Policy**

In line with its environmental sustainability strategy, Sakarya University aims to be fully carbon neutral by 2053.

**Emission Reduction (Scope 2):** In 2024, the university supplied 109.99% of its consumed energy from renewable sources via I-REC certificates, reducing its electricity-based Scope 2 emissions to 0 (zero) tons.

**Emission Reduction (Scope 1 & 3):** The university implements a "Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Program." Within this program;

Electric vehicle charging stations have been installed on campus. Electric scooter and bicycle rental services are encouraged. Low-carbon transportation was supported by closing the campus to vehicle traffic during European Mobility Week.

**Divestment Policy:** The university's 2053 carbon-neutral target and 100% renewable energy commitment demonstrate its determination to divest from carbon-intensive energy sources (coal, oil) and build an independent infrastructure. The university strategically directs its energy investments towards renewable energy sources to promote sustainability and reduce its carbon footprint.

### **CENTER SAU**

Sakarya University hosts a critical national center that provides direct services to the energy sector.

Facility: National Critical Infrastructures Test Bed Center (CENTER SAU).

Competence: The center is the sole authorized institution in Türkiye, designated by the Energy Market Regulatory Authority (EMRA), for the competence assessment, training, and certification of personnel

from companies conducting energy sector audits under the Cyber Security Competence Model Regulation in the Energy Sector.

Service: This center provides direct training and certification services to the private and public sectors in the fields of energy infrastructure security and efficiency (energy efficiency assessments, workshops).

### **Global Recognition and Impact**

Sakarya University has demonstrated its strong commitment to environmental responsibility and clean energy through its outstanding performance in national and international sustainability rankings. In the **Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings 2025**, the university ranked **83rd globally** and **3rd in Türkiye** in the category of **Affordable and Clean Energy (SDG 7)**, reinforcing its leadership in energy efficiency, renewable energy production, and low-carbon initiatives. Additionally, Sakarya University achieved high standings in both the **UI GreenMetric 2024** and **QS Sustainability 2025** rankings, reflecting its excellence in energy management, green campus practices, zero-waste policies, electric mobility systems, and clean-energy-focused R&D projects. These achievements highlight the university's proactive role in advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and promoting global awareness of sustainable energy practices.



# SDG 8. DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

**8** DECENT WORK AND  
ECONOMIC GROWTH



## SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth

### Guaranteed Living Wage

Sakarya University (SAU), as a public institution, confirms that its employment practice ensures all staff and faculty are paid at least the **living wage**, which is defined as being above the local subsistence level or the local poverty indicator for a family of four, even though the government does not explicitly use this definition. Salaries for both academic and administrative personnel are determined at the national level by the Turkish government through negotiations with unions, and annual inflation is factored into the raise rates. The net salary of all SAU academic and administrative staff is explicitly stated to be **above the subsistence limit**. Furthermore, the university's wage policy is non-discriminatory, based solely on seniority or hierarchical level, and ensures equal pay for equal work, aligning with national laws such as Civil Servants Law No. 657 and Higher Education Law No. 2547. Additional benefits, such as child allowances and academic incentives for faculty, further supplement the base salaries. While the university adheres to national pay scales that apply to all state universities, its public commitment confirms that these set wages meet or exceed the specified living wage threshold, with non-discriminatory practices and labor rights being fully upheld for all employees.

### Labor Union Rights Recognized

Sakarya University (SAU), operating as a public institution, maintains a steadfast commitment to upholding and fully recognizing the **union and labor rights** of its entire workforce, explicitly including **women and international personnel**, throughout the 2024 operational year. The framework for employment practices is legally grounded in national legislation, such as the **Civil Servants Law No. 657** and the **Higher Education Law No. 2547**, which secures the rights of all public servants and mandates equal pay for equal work. Fundamentally, the University recognizes the right to **freedom of association and collective bargaining**, as evidenced by the fact that the determination of salaries, annual inflation raises, and core employee benefits are the **result of negotiations between the Turkish government and official trade unions at the national level**. The University's policies confirm that fundamental entitlements—such as **annual leave, additional wages, promotion, and raises**—are uniformly applied nationwide to every public servant, irrespective of their role at SAU. Furthermore, the institution's Human Resources policy enforces strict **non-discrimination principles**: employee rights are identical for all staff, with classification and discrimination based on gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, or race being strictly forbidden and treated as disciplinary offenses. This comprehensive commitment extends to ensuring that services procured through outsourcing follow strict rules, guaranteeing that outsourced employees also have **equivalent rights** and that SAU monitors compliance, confirming a comprehensive recognition of worker rights across all employment categories within the institution during the 2024 period.

### Zero Workplace Discrimination

Sakarya University (SAU) possesses a comprehensive and strictly enforced policy, articulated within its Human Resources Management and Sustainable Development Goals documentation, explicitly aimed at eliminating all forms of discrimination in the workplace. This policy maintains a firm **Commitment to Equality and Non-Discrimination** by strictly prohibiting unequal treatment based on a wide range of characteristics, including **religion, sexuality (sexual orientation), gender, age, language, race, or any other personal characteristic**. The University mandates fair treatment across all employment processes, including hiring, promotion, and salary determination, ensuring that its practices align with

Turkish national legislation such as the **Civil Servants Law No. 657** and the **Higher Education Law No. 2547**. SAU views any discriminatory action—including those based on gender, age, or sexual orientation—as a severe **disciplinary offense** that will lead to an investigation and potential criminal sanctions. To ensure compliance and accountability, the University provides a mechanism for employees to report concerns or complaints, allowing submissions either by providing identification or **anonymously** through the Quality Management Information System or suggestion boxes, with guarantees of confidentiality and protection for those reporting discrimination under disciplinary regulations.

#### No Forced Labour/Child Labour

Sakarya University (SAU) maintains a clear and unequivocal institutional policy commitment to prohibiting all forms of exploitation, specifically confirming **no forced labor, no modern slavery, no human trafficking, and no child labor** within its operations for the **2024 reporting period (01.01.2024–31.12.2024)**. This commitment is formally documented in the University's Sustainable Development Goals report under "**DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**". As a public institution, SAU confirms that the **Public Employees' Law** legally guarantees the rights of all personnel, rendering the employment of unregistered or illegal workers impossible. Furthermore, SAU's policy extends its ethical labor standards beyond its direct employees to its supply chain, requiring a commitment to **guaranteeing equivalent rights of workers when outsourcing activities to third parties**. The University enforces this commitment through strict **auditing** of outsourced companies, stating that contracts can be **terminated unilaterally** if the required conditions for equivalent worker rights and ethical labor practices are not met, thereby ensuring a zero-tolerance approach to exploitation throughout the 2024 calendar year.

#### Outsourced Worker Rights Guaranteed

Sakarya University (SAU), throughout the **2024 reporting period (01.01.2024–31.12.2024)**, maintains a clear and robust institutional policy that **guarantees equivalent rights for workers** when the University outsources activities to third parties. This commitment is explicitly detailed in the University's official **Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) documentation** under the heading "**Employment Practice**". SAU mandates that its outsourcing activities must follow "strict rules," ensuring that **outsourced employees are granted equal rights** equivalent to those of direct university staff. To ensure the enforceability of this policy, the University maintains a stringent control mechanism: it actively **monitors compliance** of all contracted third-party firms. Furthermore, SAU reserves the right to impose a serious consequence for non-compliance, stating that the University **may terminate contracts unilaterally** if the conditions guaranteeing equal rights for outsourced workers are not met. This comprehensive policy, documented for the calendar year **2024**, ensures ethical labor practices and protects the rights of all workers, regardless of their employment status, within the University's operational ecosystem.

#### Gender Pay Equity Commitment

Sakarya University (SAU) maintains an institutional policy commitment to **wage scale equity** that aligns with the goal of measuring and eliminating gender-based pay differences, a policy enforced throughout the **2024 reporting period (01.01.2024–31.12.2024)**. This commitment is formally documented in the University's **Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) documentation** under **Employment Policies**. SAU explicitly states that its wage policy ensures **equal pay for equal work**,



adhering strictly to national legislation, including the **Civil Servants Law No. 657**, which prohibits discrimination in compensation. The policy confirms that salaries for all academic and administrative personnel are determined solely based on non-discriminatory factors like **seniority, hierarchical level, and academic title**, thereby eliminating discretionary pay practices that could introduce gender bias. Furthermore, the University's public commitment confirms that all personnel earn **above the subsistence level**, and the pay scale structure inherently guarantees that wages are independent of gender, religion, or any other personal characteristic. The principles underpinning this policy, which focus on maintaining gender equality in the wage scale structure, were established in prior periods (such as the reference to the 2022 operational policy) and remained foundational to SAU's employment practices throughout the 2024 calendar year.

#### Structural Pay Equity Ensured

Sakarya University (SAU), throughout the **2024 reporting period (01.01.2024–31.12.2024)**, maintains an institutional wage scale structure designed to inherently guarantee **gender pay equity**, although the University **does not publicly disclose a specific, calculated gender pay gap percentage** in its official documentation for this period. SAU's approach to equity is founded on its official **Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) documentation** under **Employment Policies**, which confirms a binding commitment to **equal pay for equal work**. This commitment is structurally enforced by national legislation, including the **Civil Servants Law No. 657** and the **Higher Education Law No. 2547**, which mandate a unified, non-discriminatory salary scale for all public employees. Salaries for all academic and administrative personnel are determined strictly by objective factors such as **seniority, hierarchical level, and academic title**, regardless of gender, religion, or any other personal characteristic. The absence of a separate, voluntary gender pay gap calculation (such as a mean or median gap percentage) for the **2024 period** is attributable to this centralized, national salary structure, which by design, prevents the salary scale from exhibiting gender-based differences for equivalent roles. The University's policy assumes and ensures equity by strictly adhering to this non-discretionary national framework.

#### Formal Employee Appeal Process

Sakarya University (SAU) confirms that throughout the **01.01.2024 – 31.12.2024 reporting period**, it maintains a formal and accessible process for all employees to appeal or submit grievances regarding their rights, compensation, and other employment concerns. This mechanism is explicitly detailed in the University's **Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) documentation** under "**Decent Work and Economic Growth**" and "**Employment Practice**". Employees are provided with the right to submit their complaints either by stating their identity or **anonymously** through the **Quality Management Information System (QMIS)**, which is an integral part of the University's integrated management system. Furthermore, personnel can submit their wishes and complaints in writing via **wishes and complaints boxes** located in each unit, with confidentiality guaranteed unless the employee requests otherwise. This multi-channel feedback mechanism, confirmed in practice throughout the **2024 calendar year**, allows staff to address issues concerning pay equity, discrimination, and other employee rights directly to senior management with guaranteed protection, thereby ensuring an ethical and fair working environment.



## **SDG 9. INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

**9** INDUSTRY, INNOVATION  
AND INFRASTRUCTURE



## Sakarya Teknokent

Sakarya Teknokent, the largest subsidiary of Sakarya University, stands as the region's foremost center of innovation, serving as the intersection point between academic research and industrial advancement. Established in 2009 under the Council of Ministers' decision published in the Official Gazette No. 26980, dated August 27, 2008, it officially commenced operations in 2010.

The shareholders of Sakarya Teknokent Inc. include Sakarya University, Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality, Adapazarı Municipality, Serdivan Municipality, Sakarya Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Sakarya Commodity Exchange, and the Sakarya University Foundation. As the sole Technology Development Zone in the province of Sakarya, the *TEKNOKENT* operates within the university campus over an area of approximately 50,000 m<sup>2</sup>. Within this zone, Blocks A, B, and D host 103 R&D offices, meeting rooms, conference areas, and social spaces. The ROSEM Building functions as an incubation center, providing offices and facilities for university-based spin-offs and start-up companies.

In 2024, the completion of the 4,265 m<sup>2</sup> Prototyping and Innovation Building significantly strengthened the Teknokent's R&D infrastructure by offering entrepreneurs and researchers dedicated spaces for product development, testing, and production. In the same year, the newly inaugurated Project Workshop enhanced collaboration among researchers with its open, nature-viewed co-working areas.

Also in 2024, the establishment of the Kosovo Office expanded the international scope of Sakarya Teknokent, fostering cooperation between Türkiye and Balkan countries in research, technology, and innovation.

A total of 103 companies currently operate within Sakarya Teknokent, 30 of which were founded by Sakarya University faculty members. These firms have successfully completed 273 R&D projects to date and continue to develop new and innovative initiatives. Joint projects coordinated by the Technology Transfer Office (ADAPTTTO) focus on sustainable production technologies, smart systems, digital transformation, and energy efficiency. These efforts strengthen Sakarya University's Regional Innovation Capacity and directly contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure).

Moreover, many companies within the Teknokent demonstrate a strong commitment to sustainable development principles by implementing energy-efficient infrastructure, waste management systems, and environmentally friendly production processes. The ongoing collaboration between Sakarya University academics and Teknokent-based companies has resulted in numerous patents, prototypes, and commercial successes—establishing Sakarya Teknokent as a driving force for innovation, sustainability, and industrial development in the region.

The strong collaboration model established between Sakarya University, Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality, and the Sakarya Chamber of Commerce and Industry supports the ecosystem of the Teknokent. Among the activities carried out within this framework, the “CO-WORK 2” program (February 29, 2024) stands out. This program brought together university faculty members, students, and industry representatives, creating a direct bridge between the real production needs of industrial enterprises and academic research outcomes. This partnership approach fosters the transfer of the university's research results to the industry and reinforces the regional development vision of local governments.





# SDG 10. REDUCED INEQUALITY

**10** REDUCED  
INEQUALITIES



## SDG 10 Reduced Inequalities

### Access to Employment for Underrepresented Groups

Sakarya University (SAU) strengthens **equitable access to employment, professional development, and career progression** for **under-represented and structurally disadvantaged groups**, including **individuals with disabilities, women, low-income students, international and refugee-background learners, and minority identities**. This institutional commitment is grounded in a **publicly articulated anti-discrimination policy**, a binding **ethical code**, and a **national legal framework** that collectively guarantee **equal opportunity, non-discriminatory recruitment, and protected access to advancement pathways**.

SAU's **Measures Against Discrimination** policy explicitly states that no individual may be treated differently on the basis of **gender, disability, ethnicity, religion, language, nationality, or socio-economic background**, while affirming **positive action (affirmative support)** where structural inequalities exist. These guarantees are reinforced by **Higher Education Institutions' Ethical Behaviour Principles** and the **Higher Education Personnel Law No. 2914**, which together establish **institutional obligations for fairness, impartiality, confidentiality, and protection of rights** across student and staff recruitment. The **SAU Ethics Board** operationalizes these principles, providing governance oversight and misconduct review mechanisms, while the **Quality Management Complaint Portal** and **Security Hotline** offer **secure, protected reporting channels** for discrimination and harassment concerns.

Aligned with these frameworks, SAU implemented **targeted outreach and empowerment programs** in 2024 to expand **employment access and participation** among historically under-represented groups:

- **Careers Beyond Barriers – Disability Employment (6 December 2024):** A major inclusive employment forum featuring leading national employers (including UNICEF, AstraZeneca, Garanti BBVA, Enerjisa, and L'Oréal Türkiye), with **live sign-language interpretation** and disability-inclusive recruitment showcases.
- **Women Leaders in Management Panel (19 December 2024):** A campus forum amplifying **women's leadership and representation** in decision-making roles.
- **Women in Business Micro-Credential Program (25 April 2024):** A structured **career empowerment pathway** supporting women's professional advancement.
- **Barrier-Free Summer Education Initiative (12 August 2024)** and **Barrier-Free Unit Representatives Meeting (6 November 2024):** System-level coordination and **accessibility improvements** supporting **students with disabilities**.
- **Violence Prevention Strategies Workshop (29 November 2024):** A campus-wide awareness initiative promoting **gender equality and safe participation environments**.
- **Career Psychological Counselling Services:** Continuous access to **individualized employability support**, mentoring, and confidence-building guidance.
- **AA+ New Graduate Career Program:** Dissemination of **inclusive career transition opportunities** for graduating students.



Monitoring and accountability are ensured through **transparent institutional data systems**, including the **2024 Administrative Activity Report**, which documents student employment support indicators and outreach engagement levels. These reporting tools demonstrate that inclusion is not only conceptual but **measured, evaluated, and continuously strengthened**.

Taken together, these **policies, legal commitments, support mechanisms, empowerment programs, and structured partnerships** show that SAU in 2024 **actively improved equitable access to employment and professional development pathways**, particularly for disadvantaged groups. The university's practices reflect a **systemic, sustained, and evidence-based approach to reducing inequalities**, fully aligned with **Reduced Inequalities** framework.

#### Anti-Discrimination & Anti-Harassment Policies in Force

Sakarya University (SAU) upholds and actively implements a comprehensive, legally grounded, and institutionally coordinated framework to **prevent discrimination, promote equality**, and ensure **inclusive access** across academic, administrative, health, and socio-cultural domains. Within the framework of the University's **2023–2027 Strategic Plan**, one of our core objectives is to provide **Inclusive, High-Quality Education** aligned with international standards, equipping learners with both professional competencies and lifelong learning skills that support their evolving needs. In this direction, SAU strengthens and expands student support mechanisms including **academic advising, accessible campus services, and career guidance**, with diversity and inclusion as foundational principles.

The University's **Measures Against Discrimination** policy—publicly accessible and institutionally enforced—reaffirms that **no student, academic, or staff member may be treated differently** based on **disability, gender, ethnicity, religion, language, socio-economic background, or sexual orientation**, and guarantees **protected reporting and complaint mechanisms** for individuals who experience or witness discrimination or harassment. This institutional commitment is grounded in national regulatory frameworks such as **Higher Education Personnel Law No. 2914** and the **Ethical Conduct Principles for Higher Education Institutions**, which collectively mandate **fairness, impartiality, human dignity, confidentiality, and equal treatment** in academic and professional processes. Oversight and implementation are coordinated through the **SAU Ethics Committee** and **confidential reporting systems**, reinforcing a **zero-tolerance policy** toward discriminatory practices.

Through the **Accessible Living and Support Coordination Unit**, the University works to **remove structural and social barriers** encountered by students with disabilities and ensures their **equitable participation** in academic, social, and cultural environments. This includes maintaining **accessible campus infrastructure**, providing **reasonable accommodations**, and coordinating new **support programs and projects** tailored to specific needs. The **Accessible Living and Support Coordination and Accommodation Services Directive** is implemented across all academic programs to prevent educational disadvantage and ensure equal access to learning opportunities.

SAU further **operationalizes inclusion** through targeted programs addressing systemic inequalities and supporting underrepresented groups, including:

- Collaboration with the **Turkish Human Rights and Equality Institution (TİHEK)** (06 March 2024) to align institutional practices with national equality standards.
- The **Women in Business Micro-Credential Program** (25 April 2024) to strengthen women's leadership and labour market advancement.
- The **Barrier-Free Summer Education Initiative** (12 August 2024) ensuring accessible academic environments for students with disabilities.
- The **University-wide Meeting of Unit Representatives for Barrier-Free Living** (06 November 2024) to monitor and enhance accessibility standards.
- The **Workshop on Campus Violence Prevention Strategies** (29 November 2024) supporting gender equality and respectful campus culture.
- The **Careers Beyond Barriers – Disability Employment Event** (06 December 2024) enabling inclusive employability pathways.
- The **Women Leaders in Management Panel** (19 December 2024) promoting representation of women in decision-making roles.

Together, these interlinked **policies, mechanisms, and action programs** demonstrate that Sakarya University does not only articulate equality in principle, but **actively operationalizes it** through **monitoring, institutional coordination, support services, awareness initiatives, and strategic partnerships**. This approach reflects a **systematic, sustained, and measurable institutional commitment to Reduced Inequalities**.

#### Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Structures

Sakarya University (SAU) demonstrates a fully institutionalized and systematic commitment to **diversity, equality, inclusion, and human rights**, ensuring equitable access to education, campus life, international mobility, and professional development for all members of its academic community. This commitment was grounded in national legislation—particularly the **Higher Education Personnel Law No. 2914**—and the **Ethical Conduct Principles for Higher Education Institutions**, which collectively guarantee **non-discrimination, fairness, confidentiality, and respect for human dignity** across academic and administrative processes.

The university's publicly articulated **Measures Against Discrimination** framework reaffirmed a zero-tolerance stance toward any form of discrimination or harassment based on **gender, disability, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, language, or sexual orientation**. The policy also included **positive-action mechanisms**, especially for individuals with disabilities, ensuring equitable participation and representation. These commitments were operationalised through the **Ethics Committee**, which oversaw compliance, evaluated incidents, and ensured transparent accountability processes.

A set of dedicated institutional units collectively ensured the continuity of SAU's **equity and inclusion governance system**:

The **Accessible Life & Support Coordination** ensured academic, social, and spatial accessibility for students with disabilities, including counseling, peer mentoring, adaptive technology,

and the **Barrier-Free Unit Representatives Meeting (06 November 2024)** to harmonize accessibility standards across faculties.

- The **Women's Studies Research Centre (SAÜKAM)** led **gender equality research, training, and violence prevention programs**, including large-scale awareness activities and support mechanisms to prevent gender-based violence.
- The **Social Contribution & Sustainability Coordination (TOKAS)** linked **inclusive development**, social wellbeing, and sustainability through high-impact community engagement activities.
- The **International Office** fostered **intercultural dialogue and inclusion** by supporting international and refugee-background students through advisory activities and cultural engagement meetings.
- The **Erasmus+ Programme Coordination Office** incorporated the **Erasmus+ Inclusion Support Framework**, providing **additional mobility grants and scoring advantages** to disadvantaged students, including students with disabilities.
- The **Study@SAU** platform ensured **transparent, equitable admission pathways** for international students, including those from low-income and conflict-affected regions.

These structural commitments translated into **high-impact SDG 10 implementation activities throughout 2024**, including:

- **Collaboration with the Turkish Human Rights and Equality Institution (TİHEK)** (06 March 2024), strengthening institutional human rights literacy.
- **International Women's Day Celebration** (08 March 2024), promoting campus-wide gender equality awareness.
- **Women in Business Micro-Credential Program** (25 April 2024), enhancing women's leadership and labour-market participation.
- **Barrier-Free Summer Education Initiative** (12 August 2024), improving equal access to academic participation for students with disabilities.
- **Workshop on Violence Prevention Strategies** (29 November 2024), building safer, gender-sensitive campus environments.
- **Careers Beyond Barriers – Disability Employment Event** (06 December 2024), connecting students with disabilities to major employers and inclusive recruitment pathways.
- **Women Leaders in Management Panel** (19 December 2024), strengthening women's representation in decision-making and governance.

Taken together, these **institutional policies, governance structures, targeted programs, and evidence-based activities** show that in 2024, Sakarya University operated a **coherent, legally aligned,**

**and actively implemented equality and inclusion system.** SAU's approach demonstrates that **equitable access, diversity, accessibility, gender equality, and intercultural inclusion** are not temporary initiatives, but foundational components of the university's identity and strategy—fully aligned with **Reduced Inequalities framework**.

#### Mentoring, Counselling and Peer Support for Underrepresented Groups

Sakarya University (SAU) demonstrates a strong institutional commitment to **inclusivity and equal access** for all members of its community, including students, staff, and academics from underrepresented groups. This commitment is reflected in a comprehensive framework that integrates **mentoring, counselling, peer-support systems, and accessibility measures** into academic and social structures, ensuring equitable participation and representation across all levels of university life. Equality and inclusion principles are embedded within SAU's sustainability, governance, and research strategies, in alignment with national frameworks on accessibility, gender equality, and social contribution.

SAU's **Social Equality Regulation (2024)** formally prohibits discrimination based on **gender, disability, language, religion, race, or socioeconomic background**, and maintains a **zero-tolerance stance toward discrimination and gender-based violence**. The regulation mandates that all academic and administrative units establish equality committees and develop mentoring and counselling mechanisms to ensure the protection, support, and empowerment of underrepresented groups.

Within this framework, SAU provides **structured academic and psychosocial support services for students with disabilities** through **Accessible Living and Support Coordination (Engelsiz SAU)**. Students with disabilities who experience difficulties in taking notes during lectures or accessing course materials are supported through a **structured peer-assistance system**, facilitated by part-time or volunteer students. Additionally, a **professional social worker** evaluates the psycho-social needs of students with disabilities, identifies barriers to accessibility, and develops **individual accommodation plans** to ensure equitable participation in teaching, learning, and assessment processes. To enhance coordination and responsiveness, each academic unit assigns a **Barrier-Free Living Representative**, who maintains continuous communication with students to ensure that necessary adjustments are implemented promptly and effectively.

The University provides **adaptive technologies, psycho-social counselling, peer mentoring, and accessible learning environments**, ensuring that students with disabilities can fully participate in academic and social life. These accommodations reflect SAU's commitment to **removing structural barriers and ensuring equitable participation**.

SAU's inclusivity efforts also extend to international and intercultural contexts. The **International Student Center** and **Study@SAU** platform support cross-cultural adaptation and access to institutional resources, while the **Erasmus+ Programme Coordination Office** implements **inclusion support measures**, providing additional resources for disadvantaged and disabled students seeking **international mobility opportunities**.

SAU also strengthens peer support and mentoring within academic units through the **Departmental Mentorship Programme (2023–2024)**, which pairs senior students with first-year students to promote academic belonging and integration. The **Career Development Coordination Center** provides individual **career coaching and psychological counselling**, as demonstrated by the **Career Coaching Workshop** held on 06 November 2024 to foster inclusive professional development pathways.

Inclusivity is further embedded in SAU's **community engagement and sustainability mission**. **TOKAS – Social Contribution & Sustainability Coordination** advances collective responsibility through peer-led learning initiatives, including the **Zero-Waste Peer Education Program (02 April 2024)**. Meanwhile, **SAÜKAM – Women's Studies Research and Application Center** promotes **gender equality, empowerment, and awareness** through research, training, and outreach activities.

In 2024, several **high-impact institutional initiatives** strengthened SAU's action on equity and inclusion:

- **International Women's Day Celebration (08 March 2024)** promoted gender equality and collective visibility.
- **Women in Business Micro-Credential Program (25 April 2024)** enhanced women's leadership and economic participation.
- **Workshop on Violence Prevention Strategies (29 November 2024)** raised awareness of gender-based violence prevention.
- **Women Leaders in Management Panel (19 December 2024)** highlighted women's leadership and strengthened mentorship networks.

Through these **interconnected support systems, accessibility mechanisms, mentoring models, and gender- and inclusion-oriented initiatives**, SAU has developed a **cohesive institutional inclusivity framework** aligned with **SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities** under the **THE Impact Rankings**. This coordinated work ensures that **equity is embedded not only in services, but in the cultural and structural fabric of the institution**, enabling all individuals to participate fully and thrive.

#### Accessibility Facilities and Services

Sakarya University reinforces its institutional commitment to equal access, inclusivity, and full participation for students with disabilities by integrating physical accessibility improvements, dedicated coordination structures, inclusive housing arrangements, adaptive technologies, and a strong culture of support across its campus. These efforts reflect a system-level approach aligned with Reduced Inequalities, ensuring that students with disabilities can engage in academic, social, and cultural life on an equal basis.

The university provides physical accessibility for hearing-impaired individuals through induction loop systems in the Medico Health Center and the Cultural & Congress Center. In addition, 120 hours of Turkish Sign Language training was delivered to healthcare staff to ensure accessible communication in clinical services. Children requiring special care are prioritized for outpatient or general anesthesia treatment in the Pediatric Dentistry Department.



**Campus Accessibility:** Through the Green Campus sustainability programme, the university implemented extensive campus-wide accessibility measures, including wheelchair-accessible pathways, ramps between buildings, elevators, tactile guiding surfaces, reserved parking, induction-loop systems, audio guidance features for visually impaired individuals, and accessible restrooms with voice-support systems. These upgrades—documented in the 2024 Completed Works Report—demonstrate intentional, ongoing investment in inclusive campus infrastructure.

**Central Coordination & Support Services:** The Barrier-Free Life and Support Coordinatorship (Engelsiz SAU) continued to serve as the central coordinating unit ensuring students with disabilities receive academic accommodations, psycho-social counselling, individualized guidance, scholarship and employment support, and peer mentoring. The unit actively organized training, inclusion awareness workshops, and the Accessible Life Representatives Meeting (24 October 2024) to ensure that every faculty and school maintains accessibility coordination at the unit level, sustaining a continuous improvement model across the institution.

**Dormitory & Housing Accessibility:** The Esentepe campus student dormitories include specially adapted rooms designed for disability accessibility, featuring adjusted layouts, accessible bathrooms, and supportive mobility arrangements. These residential accommodations ensure equal access to safe and autonomous living environments, reinforcing the university's belief that accessibility must extend beyond classrooms into daily student life.

**Adaptive Technologies & Inclusive Learning Environments:** The university provides screen readers, book-reading devices, magnification tools, embossing printers, and assistive communication technologies, enabling independent academic engagement. Classrooms and auditoriums equipped with hearing loop systems and audio-assistive devices further ensure that learners with hearing and visual disabilities can engage fully in instructional environments. Faculties maintain unit-level accessibility representatives to support inclusive pedagogical planning and academic barrier removal.

**Institutional Recognition:** On 06 June 2024, Sakarya University was awarded the YÖK “Accessible University” Flag and Badge, a national distinction recognizing the institution's leadership in accessible campus design and inclusive education systems.

**Inclusive Orientation & Academic Participation:** During the 2024 YKS intake, personalized orientation was provided to newly admitted students with disabilities to ensure early access to campus navigation, advisory services, and learning support. In addition, the Accessible Summer School (12 August 2024) ensured that students requiring academic accommodations could participate seamlessly in intensive academic periods, reinforcing continuity of learning.

**Accessibility & Safe Campus Culture:** The Violence Prevention Strategies Workshop (29 November 2024) highlighted the intersection of accessibility, gender equality, and campus safety, ensuring that students with disabilities are included in broader wellbeing and rights-protection frameworks.

Through coordinated governance, sustained infrastructure investment, disability-inclusive academic services, adapted housing, unit-level accessibility representation, and nation-recognized accessibility leadership, Sakarya University demonstrated in 2024 that accessibility is not treated as an accommodation, but as a core institutional value. These combined actions ensure that all students—regardless of disability status—can participate fully, equitably, and with dignity in the academic and social life of the university.

## Disability Support Services

Sakarya Sakarya University is committed to inclusivity and equal access to education for all students, including those with disabilities. Disability-related activities are coordinated under the *Barrier-Free Life and Support Coordinatorship* (*Engelsiz Yaşam ve Destek Koordinatörlüğü*), which ensures the academic, social, and cultural participation of students with disabilities. The unit operates in cooperation with faculty-based *Accessible Life Representatives*, who monitor accessibility practices within their departments and report regularly to the Coordinatorship. This structure aligns with the university's inclusive education policies and contributes to national initiatives such as the Council of Higher Education's (YÖK) "Accessible University Flag" Program.

The Coordinatorship provides a comprehensive portfolio of services addressing academic, administrative, physical, psychological, and social needs. These services are designed not only as reactive accommodations but as proactive, year-round mechanisms for empowerment and equal participation. Through its integrated approach, the university ensures that students with disabilities can take part in every aspect of university life.

These services include, but are not limited to:

- **Barrier-Free Life and Support Coordinatorship:** This dedicated unit identifies and addresses the academic, administrative, physical, psychological, accommodation, and social needs of students with disabilities. It develops and implements tailored programs—such as orientation sessions, mentoring schemes, and inclusion training—to ensure equal participation in all university activities.
- **Assistive Services and Technologies:** The university provides access to various assistive devices and digital tools, including screen readers, magnifiers, and braille materials. Collaboration with the *Visually Impaired Support Unit* enables the conversion of learning materials into accessible formats and supports students through adaptive technologies for inclusive learning. To ensure that students with disabilities can pursue their education on the basis of equal opportunity and that their academic performance is not adversely affected, the provisions of the Accessible Living and Support Coordination and Accommodation Services Directive are implemented across all academic programs of the university.
- **Personal Assistance:** Depending on individual requirements, Sakarya University offers personal assistants, peer note-takers, sign language interpreters, and mentoring support to help students engage effectively in both academic and social contexts. Guidance is also provided for scholarship opportunities and part-time employment positions reserved for students with disabilities.
- **Accessible Facilities:** Campus infrastructure is equipped with ramps, elevators, tactile surfaces, induction loops, and accessible restrooms to ensure full physical accessibility across all faculties and administrative buildings. The *Green Campus* initiative systematically documents and upgrades these features to meet evolving accessibility standards.
- The university provides physical accessibility for hearing-impaired individuals through induction loop systems in the Medico Health Center and the Cultural & Congress Center. In addition, 120 hours of Turkish Sign Language training was delivered to healthcare staff to ensure accessible communication in clinical services. Children requiring special care are

prioritized for outpatient or general anesthesia treatment in the Pediatric Dentistry Department.

In 2024, Sakarya University maintained an active and structured disability-support agenda that demonstrated both institutional maturity and innovation. During the first quarter, preparations for the *YÖK Accessible University Flag Awards* were carried out, involving internal evaluations and coordination meetings with faculties. In June 2024, the university received *Green, Blue, and Program Badge (Nişan)* recognitions from YÖK for its achievements in educational, social, and cultural accessibility. In August, the Faculty of Law hosted the *Accessible Summer School*, an orientation and engagement event that brought together students, faculty mentors, and peers to promote inclusive academic interaction. In September, Sakarya University earned the *Accessible Informatics Education Award* for leadership in digital accessibility and inclusive online learning practices. By October and November, unit-level *Accessible Life Representatives* meetings were convened to evaluate progress and plan further improvements in both academic and physical accessibility. Throughout the year, the university also promoted *Erasmus+ Inclusion Support* grants for students with disabilities, helping them to participate fully in international mobility programs.

Complementing these services and initiatives, the university's physical infrastructure supports full accessibility. The *Green Campus* program records and continuously enhances features such as ramps, elevators, tactile pathways, induction loops, and accessible toilets. Student housing includes rooms specifically adapted for students with disabilities, while the network of academic units ensures that accessibility standards are implemented consistently across faculties and institutes.

Communication and awareness are central to Sakarya University's inclusive culture. The *Barrier-Free Life and Support Coordinatorship* regularly disseminates news and updates through the official university portals, highlighting projects such as the *Accessible Summer School*, *YÖK Flag Awards*, *Erasmus+ Inclusion Activities*, and accessibility awareness training sessions. These digital communications, together with in-person programs, foster a university-wide culture of empathy, equality, and shared responsibility for inclusion.

Through its integrated coordination framework, specialized units, assistive technologies, inclusive infrastructure, and award-winning engagement programs, Sakarya University demonstrates a lasting institutional commitment to barrier-free education. Its holistic model—balancing policy, infrastructure, technology, and human-centered support—ensures that all students with disabilities can learn, participate, and thrive within an equitable and accessible academic environment.

#### Disability Access Programs (Mentoring & Targeted Support)

**Sakarya University** implements a comprehensive and sustained access program for students with disabilities, coordinated through the *Barrier-Free Life & Support Coordinatorship*. The program integrated mentoring-style guidance, targeted support mechanisms, financial assistance, and awareness-building activities across all faculties. The university's actions reflected both structural and human support—covering infrastructure, policy, and mentorship—to ensure that students with disabilities could participate fully in academic and social life.

**These services include, but are not limited to:**

- **Barrier-Free Life and Support Coordinatorship:** This unit is responsible for identifying and addressing the specific academic, administrative, physical, psychological, and social needs of students with disabilities. In 2024, it organized initiatives such as the *Accessible Summer School*, which brought together students, faculty mentors, and peers to strengthen inclusion; and the *Accessible Life Representatives* coordination meetings to align faculty-level accessibility efforts. The unit also promoted *TESYEV* bursaries, provided onboarding for newly admitted students, and implemented comprehensive academic and exam adaptations including extra time, accessible materials, and reader/scribe support.
- **Campus Accessibility:** The university has implemented extensive physical modifications across campus under the *Green Campus Initiative*, including ramps, elevators, tactile guidance paths, induction loops, and accessible toilets to accommodate individuals with mobility or visual impairments. These improvements ensure that all students and staff can navigate the campus safely and independently.
- The university provides physical accessibility for hearing-impaired individuals through induction loop systems in the Medico Health Center and the Cultural & Congress Center. In addition, 120 hours of Turkish Sign Language training was delivered to healthcare staff to ensure accessible communication in clinical services. Children requiring special care are prioritized for outpatient or general anesthesia treatment in the Pediatric Dentistry Department.
- **Specialized Support Services:** Sakarya University provides personalized services such as mentoring, peer assistance, and academic counseling, specifically tailored for students with disabilities. In 2024, targeted workshops like *Preparing Accessible Social Media Posts* and *Braille Alphabet Qur'an Teaching* further strengthened inclusive communication and independent learning.
- **Technological Aids:** The university offers adaptive technologies, including screen readers, braille printers, magnifiers, and speech-to-text tools, to ensure students with disabilities can fully engage with their coursework and other learning materials.
- **Special Education Department:** This department contributes to the development of strategies, tools, and educational practices that promote the independence, inclusion, and academic success of students with disabilities, preparing them for participation in both academic and everyday settings.

Complementing these targeted services, **Student Housing** provisions include rooms adapted for students with disabilities, while the **Academic Units** network ensures that inclusive practices are applied across all faculties and institutes. Regular communication through the university's **News** and **Events Portals** keeps accessibility initiatives visible, while recognition such as the *Accessible Informatics Education Award* highlights Sakarya University's national leadership in accessible and inclusive higher education.

In 2024, Sakarya University carried out a series of impactful programs supporting inclusion and empowerment:

- Training for YÖK Accessible University Awards (02 Jan 2024): Internal coordination to align institutional practices with national accessibility standards.
- Accessible Summer School Orientation (12 Aug 2024): Facilitated peer interaction and inclusive academic participation at the Faculty of Law.
- Braille Alphabet Qur'an Teaching Course (12 Sep 2024): Expanded accessible religious and cultural learning opportunities for visually impaired students.
- Accessible Life Representatives Coordination Meeting (06 Nov 2024): Ensured faculty-level accountability and planning for ongoing accessibility improvements.
- Disability, Rights-Based Approach & Accessible Environment Forum (18 Dec 2024): Strengthened institutional awareness and policy reflection on disability rights.
- Preparing Accessible Social Media Posts Training (21 Mar 2024): Improved accessible communication practices across digital platforms.
- Accessible Informatics Education Award (26 Sep 2024): National recognition of SAU's leadership in digital accessibility and inclusive academic technologies.
- YÖK Accessible University Awards – Flag and Badge Recognition (06 June 2024): Awarded Green, Blue, and Program Badges for excellence in accessible education, infrastructure, and social participation.

These initiatives collectively strengthened inclusive growth, empowerment, and equitable access—core objectives of Reduced Inequalities. SAU's sustained commitment to barrier-free education demonstrates a strategic and cultural prioritization of diversity, accessibility, and human-centered learning. The university's coordinated approach continues to reduce inequality on campus, ensuring that all students are able to learn, participate, and thrive within a supportive and equitable environment.

Through these integrated services—combining mentoring, infrastructure improvement, assistive technologies, and awareness-raising activities—**Sakarya University continues to uphold its commitment to inclusive, equitable, and barrier-free education for all students.**

#### Disability Accommodation & Access Programs

Sakarya University is firmly committed to inclusivity and ensuring equal access to education for all students, including those with disabilities. To fulfill this commitment, the university established the *Engelsiz Yaşam ve Destek Koordinatörlüğü* (Barrier-Free Life and Support Coordinatorship), which is responsible for identifying and addressing the academic, administrative, physical, psychological, accommodation, and social needs of students with disabilities. Through this coordination, the university provides a comprehensive range of services and reasonable accommodations that enable students with disabilities to participate fully in all aspects of university life.



These services include, but are not limited to:

- **Accessible Facilities:** Ensuring that all buildings and classrooms are equipped with necessary accessibility features, such as elevators, ramps, and tactile guidance paths, to facilitate easy movement throughout the campus.
- **Assistive Technologies:** Providing access to specialized devices and software tailored to individual needs, including screen readers, magnifiers, and speech-to-text applications, to support academic success.
- **Personal Assistance:** Offering services such as sign language interpreters and personal assistants to aid in communication and daily activities, ensuring effective engagement with academic content and campus life.
- **Psychological Counseling and Guidance:** Delivering counseling services to help students adapt to university life, manage stress, and overcome personal challenges.

Building on this comprehensive framework, in 2024 Sakarya University implemented a coordinated strategy that further strengthened and expanded its accessibility and support initiatives. The Coordinatorship set clear institutional goals to eliminate barriers faced by students with disabilities and to ensure equal participation in academic, social, and cultural life. These efforts were reinforced by campus-wide infrastructure improvements under the Green Campus initiative—such as accessible routes, induction loops, and specialized facilities for visually impaired students—as well as adapted dormitory rooms in the Esentepe Student Dormitory. The university's English and Turkish web portals consolidate these resources, while the *Engelsiz SAU* overview highlights ongoing mentoring, orientation, and targeted support programs. Some related programs are as follows:

**Institutional Framework & Support Units:** The Barrier-Free Life & Support Coordinatorship (Engelsiz SAU) provides academic accommodations, psycho-social counseling, mentoring, assistive technology access, and onboarding support. Its mission emphasizes rights-based empowerment and equal participation across academic, social, and cultural environments.

**Campus & Physical Accessibility:** The Green Campus initiative maintains accessible pathways, ramps, elevators, tactile surfaces, induction loops, priority parking, and maternity-friendly spaces. These universal design elements ensure safe and independent mobility for all.

**Housing & Residential Accessibility:** Dormitory facilities include specially adapted rooms and barrier-free shared environments, supporting independent living for students with disabilities.

**Academic Unit-Level Coordination:** Accessibility practices are implemented across all faculties, vocational schools, and institutes through faculty-level Accessible Life Representatives, ensuring consistent monitoring and institutional accountability.

#### Key Activities & Recognitions (2024)

- 02 Jan 2024 – Training for YÖK Accessible University Awards: Capacity-building for accessibility standards.

- 12 Aug 2024 – Accessible Summer School: Inclusive academic engagement and peer mentoring.
- 23 Sep 2024 – Accessible Informatics Education Award: National recognition for leadership in accessible digital learning.
- 06 Nov 2024 – Accessible Life Representatives Meeting: Faculty-level coordination for improvement planning.
- 18 Dec 2024 – Rights-Based Disability Forum: Promoted disability as a human rights framework.
- 06 June 2024 – YÖK Accessible University Flag & Badge Awards: Recognition for excellence in accessible education, social participation, and cultural inclusion.

Through these integrated services, infrastructure investments, and awareness-raising activities, Sakarya University continues to demonstrate strong leadership in building an inclusive, accessible, and equitable higher-education environment for all learners. Sakarya University demonstrates sustained institutional commitment to SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities through:

- Policy-driven inclusion structures
- Accessibility-centered campus design
- Assistive technology and academic accommodations
- Faculty-based coordination networks
- National-level recognition and continuous improvement

This integrated model ensures that students with disabilities can learn, participate, and thrive within an equitable, barrier-free environment.

#### Policies Protecting Individuals Reporting Discrimination

Sakarya University (SAU) demonstrates a strong and systematic institutional commitment to non-discrimination, equality, and equitable access across academic, administrative, and community settings. The university's publicly-available Measures Against Discrimination Policy establishes a governance framework that ensures fairness in student admissions, academic progression, and employment, rooted in national human rights and equality legislation (Laws No. 657, 2547, and 2914) and the university's own Ethical Principles and Values. This framework explicitly prohibits discriminatory treatment based on language, religion, race, sex, disability, or any identity attribute, ensuring that all members of the university community have access to inclusive and non-discriminatory learning and working conditions.

SAU implements positive discrimination (affirmative measures) when necessary to promote inclusive access for individuals with disabilities and underrepresented groups. The university allocates designated student quotas and staff positions specifically for individuals with disabilities, going beyond national legal requirements and reflecting equity-oriented institutional practice. Compliance with personal data confidentiality, particularly regarding disability and minority status, is regulated under the Personal Data Protection Law (KVKK) and coordinated through university-wide and faculty-level KVKK Commissions, ensuring lawful, ethical, and secure data processing.

Ethical and professional conduct across the institution is regulated through the Higher Education Institutions' Ethical Behaviour Principles and monitored by the SAU Ethics Board, whose operating procedures ensure transparency, impartial evaluation, and accountability. These standards mandate integrity, equal treatment, and procedural fairness, reinforcing an evidence-based and rights-protective institutional culture.

SAU provides secure and accessible whistleblowing channels, including the 24/7 Security Hotline (İhbar Hattı) and the Quality Management System Complaint Portal, which allow students, staff, and visitors to report discrimination, harassment, or misconduct confidentially, including the possibility of anonymous submission. All reports are formally recorded, tracked, and resolved under the Disciplinary Investigation Guidelines, aligned with the protective provisions of Laws 657, 2547, and 2914, ensuring whistleblower protection and safeguarding individuals against retaliation.

In support of capacity-building, gender equality, and inclusive participation, SAU implements a range of evidence-based outreach and empowerment initiatives, including:

- Cooperation with the Turkish Human Rights and Equality Institution (TİHEK) (06 March 2024), reinforcing institutional alignment with national and international equality norms.
- Women in Business Micro-Credential Program (25 April 2024), enhancing women's professional leadership and career advancement.
- Barrier-Free Summer Education Initiative (12 August 2024), promoting accessible and inclusive educational participation for students with disabilities.
- Barrier-Free Living Unit Representatives Coordination Meeting (06 November 2024), ensuring systematic monitoring and improvement of accessibility standards across all university units.
- Violence Prevention Strategies Workshop under the "Şiddeti Önleme Akademisi" (29 November 2024), advancing campus awareness on gender-based violence prevention and equality education.

Through transparent recruitment policies, secured reporting and follow-up mechanisms, legally grounded data protection, and capacity-building programs, Sakarya University actively builds an institutional environment that supports equity, integrity, accountability, and inclusive community participation, aligning directly with the objectives of Reduced Inequalities framework.

## Evidence of Monitoring Access for Under-Represented Groups at Sakarya University

Sakarya University (SAU) demonstrated a coherent and data-driven institutional approach to non-discrimination, equitable access, and inclusive participation, supported by both formal policy frameworks and operational support mechanisms. The university's publicly articulated Measures Against Discrimination Policy affirms that distinctions such as gender, disability status, nationality, religion, language, ethnicity, or socio-economic background may not be grounds for differential treatment in any academic or administrative process. This policy is grounded in the Higher Education Institutions' Ethical Conduct Principles (YÖK) and the Higher Education Personnel Law No. 2914, ensuring equal opportunity, impartiality, and respect for diversity across employment and student engagement practices.

SAU systematically monitors access and participation across the student lifecycle. Programme-level gender-disaggregated student numbers are publicly reported via SABİS dashboards, enabling transparency and ongoing tracking of women's and men's participation rates. The International Students Dashboard presents live enrolment data by nationality, capturing diversity across refugee-background and foreign students. Meanwhile, the 2024 Administrative Activity Report documents annual counts of students with disabilities, alongside details of associated accommodations and support services — demonstrating institutional transparency, accountability, and continuous monitoring of inclusiveness indicators.

To ensure equitable access, SAU implements affirmative and targeted support measures. The university maintains designated student quotas, support programs, and funding pathways for individuals with disabilities, disadvantaged backgrounds, and international applicants. The Accessible Life & Support Coordination Unit (Engelsiz Yaşam ve Destek Koordinatörlüğü) played a central operational role in 2024 by organizing:

Barrier-Free Summer School (12 August 2024): Course adaptations and participation supports for students with disabilities.

Disability Orientation and Social Inclusion Meetings (10 October 2024): Facilitating access to academic resources, campus spaces, and peer support.

Barrier-Free Unit Representatives Meeting (06 November 2024): Coordinated monitoring and improvement of accessibility practices across faculties.

In parallel, SAU advanced gender equality and empowerment objectives through the Women in Business Micro-Credential Program (25 April 2024), which supported women's professional leadership development and labour-market participation.

To reinforce equality and anti-discrimination awareness, the university formalized collaboration with the Turkish Human Rights and Equality Institution (TİHEK) on 06 March 2024. Additionally, the Violence Prevention Strategies Workshop (29 November 2024) under the Şiddeti Önleme Akademisi framework promoted campus-wide awareness on preventing gender-based violence and supporting safe learning environments.

Complementary measures further support inclusive access to learning resources, including library services for visually impaired students and scholarship opportunities for students with disabilities. Transparent and equitable access practices are also embedded within the 2024–2025 International Student Admissions Principles and Graduate School application calendars, which publicly define admission pathways for international and refugee-background applicants.

Taken together, these policies, reporting mechanisms, institutional collaborations, capacity-building programs, and service provisions demonstrate that Sakarya University not only monitors participation among women and men (gender), students with disabilities, and international/refugee-background students, but also actively supports their inclusion through structured governance, accessibility planning, and targeted empowerment initiatives. SAU's model reflects ethical governance, data-driven monitoring, and equality-oriented institutional culture—aligning directly with Reduced Inequalities framework.





# SDG 11. SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

**11** SUSTAINABLE CITIES  
AND COMMUNITIES



## 11.2 Support for Art and Heritage

Sakarya University supports art and cultural heritage through its research, education, and community engagement activities. By organizing public exhibitions, concerts, and cultural events, the university enhances access to local culture and heritage, positioning art as a vital tool for sustainability and social inclusion. Through its culture centers, art galleries, library, and open natural spaces, Sakarya University contributes to the preservation and promotion of both cultural and natural heritage.

### 11.2.1 Public Access to Buildings

Sakarya University keeps its culturally significant venues—such as the Congress and Culture Center, the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture Exhibition Gallery, and the Central Library—open to public access, along with its forested areas and open campus spaces overlooking the lake.

Throughout the year, concerts, theater performances, art exhibitions, and conferences held in these venues are offered to the community free of charge, reflecting the university's strong commitment to preserving art, culture, and natural heritage.

The Sakarya University State Conservatory Fasil Ensemble held a concert titled *“Nihavend Faslı”* on December 10, 2024, at the Turgut Özal Congress and Culture Center. During the event, significant works of classical Turkish music were performed using traditional instruments such as the ney, kanun, and violin, accompanied by vocalists, and presented to the public. The concert was free of charge, enabling the university to engage with the community through art and culture.

The *“Women and Color Exhibition”* was inaugurated on March 6, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. in the Art Gallery of Sakarya University's Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture. Organized in honor of International Women's Day on March 8, the exhibition featured works presented directly by the artists and was held with the participation of faculty members and students. The exhibition attracted great interest and remained open to visitors until March 15, 2024.

On June 10, 2024, the Department of Painting at Sakarya University's Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture organized an exhibition titled *“Transformation from Waste to Art”* in the central library area. In this exhibition, students created two- and three-dimensional artworks using waste materials, aiming to raise environmental awareness and draw attention to the issue of waste and its impact on natural life. The exhibition was open to the public.

### 11.2.2 Public Access To Libraries

Sakarya University regards open access to information as a social responsibility and offers its libraries for free public use both physically and digitally. The university's Central Library is open not only to students, academic, and administrative staff but also to external stakeholders and all visitors. Open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, the library allows users to benefit from its study areas and resources at any time. For campus security reasons, only a brief registration process is required; beyond this, no membership, fee, or special permission is needed for entry. Guest researchers, school groups accompanied by teachers, and individual visitors can examine printed materials on-site. Public access principles are regulated by the Sakarya University Library Directive, which is publicly available.

In addition, Sakarya University implements an open-access policy in the digital environment. Through the [SAU Open Access Repository \(e-Archive\)](#), thousands of publications—including theses, academic articles, books, and reports—are freely available to everyone. Moreover, the [Open Access Databases](#) list published on the library website enables the public to directly access online academic resources. No user account or authentication process is required for these databases; access is entirely automatic and unlimited. In this way, Sakarya University fully adopts an open-access policy in both physical and digital information sharing.

Library services, access conditions, and user definitions are clearly stated on the university's official website. The [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) page explicitly notes that individuals outside the university may also benefit from the library. All these documents and pages are publicly accessible online through permanent links.

As a result of these practices, Sakarya University stands among the leading institutions promoting access to knowledge. By establishing a system that allows everyone to benefit freely from both its campus library and digital resources, the university contributes to the principles of equal educational opportunity, lifelong learning, and social inclusion. This policy is directly aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 11 – *Sustainable Cities and Communities*, specifically Target 11.4: “*Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and educational heritage.*”

### **11.2.3 Public Access To Museums**

In line with the principle of preserving cultural heritage and promoting access to art, Sakarya University provides cultural spaces that are open to all segments of society. Within this scope, the Art Gallery located in the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture serves as a cultural and artistic venue that both university members and the public can freely access throughout the year through various exhibitions and events.

The Art Gallery creates a platform for students, academics, and artists to share their work with the community. Local residents, teachers, students, and art enthusiasts can visit the exhibitions free of charge. Only an ID check is required for entry; no fee, membership, or invitation is necessary. The gallery is located on the ground floor of the faculty building and is equipped with accessibility arrangements for individuals with disabilities.

In 2024, the “[With Clay on Her Hands...](#)” Ceramics Exhibition held at the Art Gallery of Sakarya University's Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture was organized with free public access. The exhibition, prepared by graduate student Gülşen Mutlu, featured artistic works themed around “wearable ceramics” in women's clothing and was open to visitors between February 19 and March 1, 2024. The event was announced on the university's official news portal and was open to participation from all campus visitors.

The “[Women and Color](#)” Exhibition, organized by the Art Gallery of Sakarya University's Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture in honor of International Women's Day, was inaugurated on March 6, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. The exhibition featured original works by female artists and students, presented directly by the artists themselves, and attracted great interest from faculty members, students, and art enthusiasts.

The exhibition was open to the public between March 1 and March 15, 2024. Visitors from outside the campus were also able to enter free of charge after an ID check. The event was announced to the

public and documented through the university's official news portal ([haber.sakarya.edu.tr](http://haber.sakarya.edu.tr)), where it remains publicly accessible.

The annual "Graduation Exhibition" organized by the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture at Sakarya University brings together original artworks created throughout the year by students from the Painting, Sculpture, Ceramics, and Design departments. Held in the Faculty Art Gallery and workshop areas, the exhibition is open to university members as well as the city's residents and is entirely free of charge.

This exhibition enables students to share their artistic creations with the community, fostering creativity and enhancing cultural awareness. During the exhibition, students from different departments, faculty members, families, and art enthusiasts from the city visited the event, thereby strengthening the cultural connection between the university and the wider community.

The 11th PonART Painting Competition Exhibition, organized by the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture at Sakarya University in collaboration with PonART, was opened to art enthusiasts on Monday, December 2, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. in the faculty exhibition hall. The exhibition featured selected works created by university students and young artists and was freely open to the public.

The event not only provided young artists with an opportunity to present their creativity to society but also made art more accessible, strengthening cultural interaction and social engagement. Visited with great interest by faculty students, academic staff, parents, and local residents, the exhibition fostered an inclusive learning environment that supports artistic production.

#### **11.2.4 Public Access To Green Spaces**

##### **Sakarya University – Free and Inclusive Access to Open and Green Areas**

In line with its Green Campus vision, Sakarya University provides permanent and free public access to its open and green spaces throughout the year. Of the Esentepe Campus's total area of 2,330,665 m<sup>2</sup>, approximately 979,192 m<sup>2</sup> consists of green and forested zones.

Overlooking the scenic Sapanca Lake, the university offers an environment intertwined with nature, serving as both an educational and recreational space. Walking paths, green rest areas, bicycle routes, and picnic points are open to students, staff, and the public without any fee, membership, or special permission requirements.

The Green Campus approach integrates the university's principles of environmental sustainability and community engagement. Within this framework, local residents, families, and school groups frequently visit the campus to enjoy nature walks, take photographs, and participate in outdoor cultural and artistic events.

Information, visuals, and maps related to the university's green areas are publicly available on the Sustainability Office's **Green Campus webpage**. Through these initiatives, Sakarya University contributes to SDG 11.7 by creating an accessible, inclusive, and sustainable living environment for all segments of society.

**SAU Spring Festival (May 2024)**

Held on May 17, 2024, the SAU Spring Festival demonstrated Sakarya University’s commitment to providing free and inclusive public access to its open and green campus areas. The event took place across the expansive outdoor spaces of the Esentepe Campus and was open to students, university staff, and the public free of charge.

Throughout the festival, the university’s green lawns and recreational areas hosted concerts, student club activities, and art performances. Numerous visitors from Sakarya and nearby districts gathered on campus to enjoy events centered around music, art, and nature.

By enabling public participation in large-scale outdoor events such as the Spring Festival, Sakarya University strengthens its Green Campus approach and shares its campus spaces with the community. This practice contributes to SDG 11.7 by promoting accessible, inclusive, and safe public areas for all.

**11.2.5 Arts And Heritage Contribution**

**11.2.5 Arts And Heritage Contribution**

Throughout 2024, Sakarya University organized numerous public, free, and inclusive art events to contribute to the promotion of local art and cultural heritage. These events, coordinated by the State Conservatory and the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture, included concerts, musical performances, folk music shows, theater plays, and traditional art exhibitions.

The activities were held in venues accessible to both students and the local community, such as the Turgut Özal Culture and Congress Center and the faculty exhibition halls. These initiatives make a strong contribution to the university’s efforts toward SDG 11.4 (preservation of cultural heritage) and SDG 11.7 (inclusive and accessible public spaces).

**Visual and Performing Arts: Exhibitions, Concerts, Theater, and Folk Music Performances (Cultural Heritage Focused)**

Date	Event Name	Type	Open to the Public
January 2024	<u>Trio Galante – Chamber Music Concert</u>	Classical Music Concert	Yes
January 2024	<u>Rasim Soylu – “Witnesses of War” Painting Exhibition</u>	Painting Exhibition (Frankfurt Turkish Cultural Center)	Yes
February 2024	<u>“With Clay in Her Hands...” Ceramics Exhibition</u>	Ceramic Art Exhibition (Master’s Student Show)	Yes



February 2024	<u>Sıra Gecesi Concert</u>	Folk Music	Yes
March 2024	<u>Piano and Chamber Music Concert</u>	Classical Music	Yes
March 2024	<u>“Women and Color” Group Exhibition</u>	Painting and Traditional Arts Exhibition	Yes
March 2024	<u>“Biz” Breeze Concert</u>	Choral Performance	Yes
March 2024	<u>March 8 International Women’s Day Concert</u>	Commemorative Concert	Yes
April 2024	<u>Hicaz Faslı Concert</u>	Classical Turkish Music	Yes
April 2024	<u>Piano Recital II</u>	Solo Piano	Yes
April 2024	<u>Turkish Folk Music Concert</u>	Folk Music	Yes
April 2024	<u>Accordion Gala</u>	Instrumental Performance	Yes
April 2024	<u>“Feast Table” Theater Play</u>	Theater	Yes
April 2024	<u>Onur Karaalioğlu – Personal Drawing Exhibition</u>	Drawing Exhibition (Solo Art Event)	Yes
April 2024	<u>International Mixed Ceramics Exhibition</u>	Ceramic Art Exhibition (International Participation)	Yes
May 2024	<u>From Çoruh to Kaçkars – Artvin Folk Songs</u>	Regional Folk Music	Yes
May 2024	<u>From Lyrics to Composition, from Composition to Word</u>	Classical Turkish Music	Yes
May 2024	<u>Colorful Melodies from the Past</u>	Music Concert	Yes
May 2024	<u>Classical Turkish Music Choir</u>	Choral Performance	Yes

May 2024	<u>Ceyhun Can Concert – Turkish Folk Music</u>	Folk Music Concert (State Conservatory Student Performance)	Yes
May 2024	<u>Seyfi Demir Concert – Black Sea Melodies</u>	Regional Folk Music Concert (State Conservatory Student Performance)	Yes
May 2024	<u>SAU Rock Community – Rock Concert I</u>	Rock Concert	Yes
May 2024	<u>SAU Rock Community – Rock Concert II</u>	Rock Concert	Yes
May 2024	<u>SAU Rock Community – Rock Concert II</u>	Rock Concert	Yes
May 2024	<u>Merve Germiş Şen – Solo Exhibition</u>	Illumination and Miniature Art (Traditional Turkish Arts)	Yes
May 2024	<u>PonART Painting Competition Exhibition</u>	Painting Competition Exhibition	Yes
May 2024	<u>Carpet, Rug, and Traditional Fabric Patterns Exhibition</u>	Traditional Handicrafts Exhibition	Yes
June 2024	<u>Nihavend Faslı – Songs of Zeki Müren</u>	Turkish Art Music	Yes
November 2024	<u>Prof. Dr. A. Sacit Açıkgözoğlu Talk – “Mimar Sinan and the Ottoman Spiritual Climate”</u>	Cultural Heritage and Architecture Talk	Yes
December 2024	<u>Mevlevi Ceremony and Whirling Dervish Performance</u>	Sufi Music & Whirling Ceremony	Yes
December 2024	<u>Şeb-i Arus – Commemoration of Mevlana</u>	Cultural Performance	Yes
December 2024	<u>“The Evils of Tobacco” Theater Play</u>	Theater	Yes

Throughout 2024, Sakarya University organized more than 30 concerts, theater performances, and art events, making a significant contribution to local art and the preservation of cultural heritage. The fact that these events were conducted free of charge and in an inclusive manner demonstrates the university's full alignment with SDG 11.4 (Preservation of Cultural Heritage) and SDG 11.7 (Accessible Public Spaces).

In addition, all these activities were regularly shared on the university's official digital platforms — [haber.sakarya.edu.tr](http://haber.sakarya.edu.tr) and [etkinlik.sakarya.edu.tr](http://etkinlik.sakarya.edu.tr) — ensuring transparent documentation of Sakarya University's cultural events. This approach highlights the university's identity not only as an academic institution but also as a vibrant cultural center that supports art, culture, and social interaction.

By organizing events both on campus and open to the participation of the local community, Sakarya University has strengthened its position as an exemplary higher education institution that brings art to society and enhances cultural sustainability.

#### **11.2.6 Record And Preserve Cultural Heritage**

Sakarya University conducts comprehensive academic and community-based projects to record, document, and preserve local folklore, traditional handicrafts, oral culture, language, and the cultural values of communities shaped by migration, ensuring the transmission of this heritage to future generations.

##### **Traditional Handicrafts and Masters of Sakarya within the Scope of Intangible Cultural Heritage**

The book “Traditional Handicrafts and Masters of Sakarya within the Scope of Intangible Cultural Heritage,” authored by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ela Taş of Sakarya University, explores 25 traditional crafts practiced in Sakarya Province—such as weaving, saddlery, pack-saddle making, sericulture, and rope making—maintained through traditional production methods. The study documents these crafts through interviews with the masters who continue these traditions, aiming to preserve and transmit endangered handicrafts to future generations.

##### **Department of Traditional Turkish Arts**

Within the Faculty of Fine Arts at Sakarya University, the Department of Traditional Turkish Arts provides hands-on education in traditional art forms such as calligraphy, illumination, miniature painting, marbling (ebru), tile making, and carpet weaving. The department not only teaches these arts but also contributes to the preservation of cultural heritage through restoration, conservation, and contemporary interpretation projects. Each year, exhibitions and workshops are organized to present modern interpretations of Turkish decorative arts to the public.

##### **Sakarya City Memory – Digital Cultural Heritage Archive**

The “Sakarya City Memory” project, carried out by Sakarya University, aims to document and digitally preserve the city's cultural and historical heritage for public access. Within the scope of the project, Sakarya's historical buildings, cultural values, traditional lifestyles, folk narratives, handicrafts, and other elements that shape the city's collective memory are archived in photographic, textual, and documentary formats.

This initiative serves as an important digital resource for preserving local culture and passing it on to future generations. The platform is open to researchers, students, and the public, aiming to make Sakarya's cultural identity more visible and accessible.

#### **The project “Past and Present: The Ada Manavs,”**

The project “Past and Present: The Ada Manavs,” carried out by the Sakarya University State Conservatory, documents the musical culture, folk dances, traditional clothing, and lifestyle of the Manav community through field research, thereby contributing to the preservation of oral and visual folk culture.

Through these integrated initiatives, Sakarya University records, preserves, and revitalizes intangible cultural heritage at both local and national levels. Projects focusing on traditional handicrafts, digital cultural archiving, Turkish decorative arts, and the Ada Manav community make significant contributions to preserving cultural diversity and ensuring the intergenerational transmission of knowledge. All outputs are publicly accessible through the university's digital platforms, thereby demonstrating transparency, inclusiveness, and a strong commitment to SDG 11.4 and SDG 11.7.

### **11.4 Sustainable Practices**

Universities are responsible for developing their transportation and housing systems in environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable ways in alignment with the goal of sustainable cities and communities. In this context, institutions contribute to urban sustainability by promoting low-carbon transportation options (such as bicycles, electric vehicles, public transport, and walkable campuses), providing accessible and affordable housing, improving energy-efficient dormitories and residences, and collaborating with local governments.

In line with this approach, Sakarya University provides free shuttle services, bicycle paths, electric scooter zones, and public transportation integration to facilitate the mobility of staff and students. Additionally, the university offers affordable housing and dormitory options around the campus to reduce the living costs of academic and administrative personnel. These facilities encourage staff to reside close to campus, thereby reducing transport-related carbon emissions and enhancing quality of life.

#### **11.4.1 Sustainable practices targets**

Sakarya University has developed an integrated management system to reduce the environmental impacts of campus transportation and promote a culture of sustainable mobility. Vehicle entries, exits, and permit applications are regularly monitored through the SABIS (Sakarya University Information System), and the collected data are transferred to SAUCO<sub>2</sub> – the Sustainable Carbon Tracking System. This system enables the measurement of Scope 3 (transportation-related) emissions in the university's annual carbon footprint calculations. Meanwhile, the SAKUS (Sakarya Transportation System) mobile application allows real-time tracking of public transportation routes, stop densities, and bus schedules, helping the university community choose faster, more accessible, and low-carbon travel options.

Within the framework of the Green Campus Program, the university promotes sustainable transportation through infrastructure investments such as bicycle lanes, electric scooter stations, pedestrian-priority routes, and free shuttle services. These facilities encourage students and staff to use low-carbon modes of transport for short distances, thereby reducing vehicular traffic and lowering the campus's overall carbon footprint. Bicycle parking areas, scooter charging points, and safe walking paths established across the campus provide secure and accessible options for environmentally friendly commuting.

Additionally, electronic systems that regulate vehicle entry, color-coded parking zones, parcel delivery points, and permit-based access help maintain traffic order and carbon management. For example, the Trendyol delivery point allows couriers to deliver packages without entering the campus, thereby reducing logistics-related traffic and emissions. All these practices collectively limit private vehicle use, minimize parking demand, and strengthen the university's sustainable transport framework.

These efforts under the Green Campus Program reflect Sakarya University's firm commitment to reducing vehicle dependency and increasing the use of alternative transportation modes. Although specific numerical targets (such as 15% or 20%) are not formally stated in official documents, the university has adopted the strategic goal of gradually decreasing private car use while promoting low-carbon travel alternatives such as cycling, e-scooters, and walking. This approach aligns with Türkiye's 2053 Net-Zero Emission target and aims to embed sustainable mobility practices as a permanent part of campus life.

#### **11.4.2 Encouraging Sustainable Commuting**

Sakarya University implements a series of incentive-based practices to promote sustainable transportation habits and reduce environmental impacts among academic and administrative staff, as well as students accessing the campus. In this context, free staff shuttles operating during morning and evening hours help reduce private vehicle use and lower carbon emissions. On-campus bus and minibus routes also operate free of charge throughout the day, offering an accessible, affordable, and environmentally friendly transportation system for students and employees. In addition, the 54% public transportation discount provided by the Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality supports sustainable travel between the city center and the campus.

To promote zero-emission mobility for short distances, the university has established bicycle lanes and a free bicycle and e-scooter sharing system, along with secure parking areas in front of faculties. Furthermore, discounted decal applications for electric vehicle owners and charging stations installed across the campus encourage the use of low-emission vehicles.

Sakarya University also raises awareness and strengthens environmental consciousness among its community by organizing events such as Car-Free Campus Day, bicycle tours, and sustainable mobility seminars each year during European Mobility Week. These activities, carried out in cooperation with local authorities and student clubs, contribute to the wider adoption of sustainable transportation practices within society.

Through all these initiatives, university members are able to commute to work and study with lower carbon emissions in a cost-effective and accessible manner. By implementing these policies, Sakarya

University continues to strengthen its culture of sustainable mobility and advance in alignment with Türkiye's 2053 Net-Zero Carbon goal.

#### **11.4.3 Encouragement or Permission for Remote Working**

Sakarya University promotes remote and flexible working models to support the work–life balance of its employees and enhance institutional efficiency. Under the “Principles of Flexible and Remote Working,” published through internal university circulars, remote work practices for administrative staff continued periodically throughout 2024.

Through the integrated digital management platform SABİS (Sakarya University Information System) — accessible at <https://sabis.sakarya.edu.tr> — staff can carry out document approvals, official correspondence, and online meetings from outside the campus. This system ensures the transparent implementation of remote and hybrid work models and is featured in the university's *2024 Administrative Activity Report* under its commitments to digital governance and sustainability.

In academic units, the Sakarya University Distance Education Application and Research Center (UZEM) provides the necessary infrastructure for conducting regular online meetings, seminars, and course planning sessions. Accessible via <https://uzem.sakarya.edu.tr>, this platform offers a flexible and accessible working environment for both academic and administrative personnel, thus fostering a work model aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities).

The university administration is also developing flexible working hours and compressed workweek models, coordinated by the Directorate of Human Resources and monitored within institutional practices.

Furthermore, Sakarya University supports the “Half-Day – Half-Salary” policy implemented by the Ministry of Family and Social Services of the Republic of Türkiye. Through its human resources portal, the university provides information and guidance to ensure that eligible female employees can fully exercise their legal rights. This initiative helps mothers balance family responsibilities with their professional lives and reinforces the university's commitment to creating an inclusive, gender-equal, and family-friendly working environment.

Sakarya University continuously strengthens its digital infrastructure supporting remote work, modernizing its communication, document management, and meeting systems to enhance institutional capacity. The integrated online platforms — SABİS, UZEM, and the Human Resources Portal — demonstrate the university's dedication to transparency and digital sustainability.

Through these comprehensive practices, Sakarya University has established an exemplary working model that improves employees' quality of life while advancing institutional sustainability, digital transformation, and social inclusion.

#### **11.4.4 Affordable housing for staff**

Although public institutions in Türkiye are subject to certain legal restrictions regarding property ownership, Sakarya University provides affordable housing opportunities to support the well-being of its employees. Administrative and academic staff can benefit from university housing located within or near the campus at symbolic rental rates, which are significantly lower than market prices.



These housing units are primarily allocated to married employees, those with children, or staff members who have been assigned to Sakarya from other cities. This practice helps reduce accommodation expenses, improve living standards, and maintain a healthy work-life balance for employees.

The university has established clear and transparent regulations governing the allocation and use of these residences. Under the Housing Directive, the application requirements, evaluation criteria, and usage guidelines are detailed and publicly accessible through the university's official website. Personnel wishing to apply for housing can submit their applications online via SABİS (Sakarya University Information System), where requests are evaluated in accordance with the directive, and results can be monitored digitally.

Through these systematic and inclusive practices, Sakarya University offers its employees safe, accessible, and cost-effective housing options, thereby enhancing staff welfare and institutional commitment.

Through these systematic and inclusive practices, Sakarya University provides its employees with safe, accessible, and affordable housing opportunities, thereby strengthening staff welfare and institutional cohesion. This initiative directly contributes to SDG 11.1 (Ensure access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services) and supports SDG 8.5 (Promote decent work and equal opportunities for all) by improving the living conditions and work-life balance of university employees.

#### **11.4.5 Affordable housing for students**

Sakarya University cooperates with the Credit and Dormitories Institution (KYK) to ensure that students have access to safe, accessible, and affordable housing options. KYK dormitories located within and around the Esentepe Campus provide students with secure and low-cost accommodation opportunities close to the university. The fees of these dormitories are set significantly lower than those of private dormitories and apartments in the city center, thereby reducing students' financial burdens and supporting their academic life.

In addition, Sakarya University students can benefit from scholarship and social support programs offered by the SAU Foundation (SAÜVAK) and the Department of Health, Culture, and Sports (SKS) to cover part of their accommodation expenses. All these practices are directly linked to SDG 11.1 (Ensure access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing). By improving students' living conditions, the university continues to foster an inclusive and sustainable campus community.

#### **11.4.6 Pedestrian Priority On Campus**

Sakarya University implements a comprehensive Green Campus Practices Policy that prioritizes pedestrian safety, accessibility, and environmentally friendly mobility across the Esentepe Campus and other university locations. By separating vehicle and pedestrian routes throughout the campus, the university has created a safe, organized, and accessible circulation network. Pedestrian walkways are clearly marked and divided from vehicle lanes, ensuring that students, academic and administrative staff, and visitors can move safely within the campus.

Vehicle traffic at campus entrances is carefully regulated, and parking areas are positioned around the campus perimeter to reduce vehicle density in inner zones. Roads surrounding the Rectorate, the Faculty of Engineering, and the Central Library have been designated as pedestrian-priority zones, where the vehicle speed limit is restricted to 20 km/h. These measures make walking the primary mode of transportation within the campus, enhancing safety while contributing to the reduction of carbon emissions.

Pedestrian paths are equipped with ramps and tactile paving to support accessibility for individuals with disabilities, while separate and clearly marked routes for cyclists encourage eco-friendly transportation. Pedestrian crossings are regularly renewed, and the maintenance and lighting of pathways are managed by the Directorate of Construction and Technical Affairs.

All these practices are defined within Sakarya University's Green Campus Practices Framework and supported by the Traffic Directive (2024). Both documents are publicly available: Through these measures, the university actively promotes safe, inclusive, and low-carbon mobility within the campus, directly contributing to SDG 11.2 (Sustainable Transport) and SDG 11.7 (Accessible Public Spaces).

#### **11.4.7 Local Authority Collaboration Regarding Planning And Development**

Sakarya University maintains close cooperation with the Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality to enhance urban accessibility and campus infrastructure. In 2024, the municipality completely renewed the main access road leading to Esentepe Campus, significantly improving traffic safety, pedestrian mobility, and environmental quality. This joint initiative exemplifies integrated urban planning that strengthens safe and sustainable connections between the university and the city.

In collaboration with Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality, Sakarya University developed new bicycle routes connecting Esentepe Campus to nearby residential areas. The project aims to reduce motor vehicle traffic, encourage zero-emission mobility, and integrate the campus into the city's Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan. In doing so, it supports low-carbon transportation policies and strengthens environmental awareness and responsibility within the academic community.

Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality introduced a fixed and discounted public transport fare of 5 TL for high school and university students using metrobüs, ADARAY, and city buses. Developed in coordination with higher education institutions, including Sakarya University, this policy ensures equitable and affordable access to education and employment opportunities. It reduces students' transportation costs and encourages the use of public, low-emission modes of travel.

Sakarya University enhances community resilience through partnerships with local organizations such as the Sakarya Young Businessmen Association (GİAD). A cooperation protocol signed in 2024 focuses on disaster preparedness training, search-and-rescue capacity building, and risk reduction strategies, complementing municipal emergency planning efforts.

Through its comprehensive collaborations in infrastructure, sustainable transportation, education, and disaster resilience, Sakarya University and the Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality exemplify an advanced model of academic-municipal partnership that fosters sustainable urban planning and inclusive community development. Sakarya University actively contributes data, research insights, and academic expertise to municipal sustainability planning committees, reinforcing evidence-based

decision-making processes. These initiatives strongly align with SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), SDG 13 (Climate Action), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), reflecting the university's commitment to integrated and sustainable urban progress.

#### **11.4.8 Planning Development - New Build Standards**

Sakarya University fully complies with national standards prioritizing **energy efficiency, environmental sustainability, and user comfort** in all new construction and renovation projects across its campuses. Within this scope, all buildings are designed in accordance with the **Energy Performance in Buildings Regulation (BEP-TR)** and the **Green Certificate Regulation for Buildings and Settlements**. The projects integrate features such as **natural ventilation, maximum use of daylight, sensor-based water and energy-saving systems, and LED-based lighting solutions**.

Approximately **90% of existing buildings** have been redesigned to improve daylight performance and equipped with **high-insulation glass systems and energy-efficient materials**. In line with the **Presidential Decree on Energy Savings in Public Buildings** and the **Public Buildings Energy Saving Target and Implementation Guide (2024–2030)**, the university assigns an **energy manager** to each public building in accordance with the **Energy Efficiency Law No. 5627**, aiming to achieve at least **30% energy savings by 2030**.

In this context, the **Faculty of Political Science Building** and the **Central Research Laboratories Extension Building**, both completed in **2024**, are equipped with **energy management panels, automatic lighting and water-saving sensors, natural ventilation systems, LED lighting, and fire and flood warning mechanisms**. Additionally, the new **Faculty of Medicine Building at Korucuk Campus** features a **highly insulated façade system, water-efficient fixtures, and naturally ventilated corridors**.

All construction and renovation processes are coordinated by the **Directorate of Construction and Technical Affairs** and the **Green Campus Coordination Office**, ensuring that each project achieves an **energy efficiency class of B or higher** under the BEP-TR framework.

This comprehensive approach reflects Sakarya University's **Sustainable Campus Policy**, integrating **energy management, water efficiency, indoor environmental quality, and innovative building technologies** into a holistic **green building strategy**. All related practices and technical details are publicly available on [the Green Campus web page](#).

#### **11.4.9 Building On Brownfield Sites**

Sakarya University prioritizes the preservation of natural areas by repurposing existing spaces and older building stock within the campus to meet its new construction needs. According to the **2024 Activity Report**, the majority of the projects carried out by the **Department of Construction and Technical Affairs** consist of renovation, refurbishment, structural strengthening, and modernization works.

Within this scope:

- Through the **Rectorate Building Renovation Project**, the existing 10,700 m<sup>2</sup> complex comprising five blocks was structurally reinforced and fully refurbished, allowing the building to be refunctionalized.

- In the **Engineering M2 Building**, an unused storage area was converted into restrooms to meet the needs of students and staff.
- As part of the **C Block Laboratory Renovation**, three previously unused rooms were transformed into a Physics Laboratory.
- The **Open Sports Facilities** and the old infrastructure systems surrounding the campus were rehabilitated, with drainage and internet lines completely renewed.

These practices strengthen the principle of **reusing existing built spaces** rather than developing new buildings on undeveloped land. The university's approach supports the concept of **brownfield redevelopment**, contributing to the **preservation of green spaces** and the **optimization of on-campus land use**.

Sakarya University, Department of Construction and Technical Affairs – "2024 Construction Activities"



## **SDG 12. RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION**

**12** RESPONSIBLE  
CONSUMPTION  
AND PRODUCTION



## Ethical & Sustainable Procurement, Waste, and Single Use Minimisation Policies at Sakarya University

Sakarya University (SAU) operates an integrated sustainability governance framework that embeds **ethical and sustainable procurement, hazardous waste management, quantitative waste measurement, and plastic/disposable item minimisation** across all campuses. Policies are aligned with Türkiye's **Zero Waste Regulation**, the **Green Deal/Circular Economy strategies (2024–2030)**, **Energy Efficiency Strategy 2030**, and the **2053 Green Development & Circular Economy Vision**. Traceability is ensured through the national **MOTAT (Integrated Environmental Information System)**; circular recovery is implemented with **SEKAY**; and performance is monitored institution wide via **SAUCO2**.

### National & Legal Alignment

SAU's policy suite complies with and operationalises:

- **Zero Waste Regulation and Waste Management Regulation (02.04.2015–29314)**,
  - **Regulation on Medical Waste (25.01.2017–29959)**, **WEEE (26.12.2022–32055)**, **Batteries & Accumulators (31.08.2004–25569)**,
  - **Regulation on Pollution by Hazardous Substances in Water (76/464/EC; 26.11.2005–26005)**,
  - **Green Public Procurement Strategy (2024–2030)**, **EU Circular Economy Package**.
- These instruments underpin SAU's commitments to prevention, source separation, safe management, circular recovery, and transparent reporting.

### Governance & System Architecture

- **Lead bodies:** Sustainability Commission; **Zero Waste Coordinatorship** (policy implementation and audits); Directorate of Administrative & Financial Affairs (procurement); Directorate of Construction & Technical Affairs (infrastructure).
- **Enterprise systems:**
  - **MOTAT** for legal traceability of hazardous/recyclable streams;
  - **SAUCO2** for energy/resource/carbon monitoring linked to procurement categories;
  - **Integrated Procurement Information System** for supplier documentation and lifecycle evidence.
- **Certification:** **Zero Waste Certificate** in place; **ISO 14001** Environmental Management System preparations ongoing.

### Policy I - Ethical & Sustainable Procurement of Food and Supplies

**Purpose:** Ensure transparent, responsible purchasing with environmental and social safeguards across the full lifecycle.

#### Core principles

1. **Environmental sustainability:** Preference for **local/seasonal** and, where possible, **organic** producers; reduced transport emissions; eco labelled and recycled content goods; energy efficient equipment (A+/A++/A+++).
2. **Social responsibility:** Supplier adherence to **fair labour, OHS and equality** standards; documented compliance and audit readiness.



3. **Circularity by design:** Reusable, recyclable, or biodegradable products and packaging; take back and bulk delivery options.
4. **Transparency & accountability:** Sustainability clauses embedded in contracts; routine compliance evidence and performance reviews.

#### Campus practices (food & supplies)

- **Single use elimination in dining:** Meals on porcelain with metal cutlery; **no disposable containers**; campus wide **refill stations** and drinking fountains; discounts for thermos/mug users.
- **Sustainable packaging & chemicals:** Recyclable/biodegradable packaging; preference for **concentrated** cleaning products to cut plastic.
- **Ethical contracting:** Zero waste and environmental obligations included; periodic verification.

#### Supply chain mechanisms

- Green specifications in tenders; **inefficient equipment purchases restricted**.
- University branded items (bags, notebooks, event kits) from **recycled/organic fibres**.
- Supplier onboarding includes orientation to SAU standards and national environmental/OHS regulations.

#### Strategic alignment & improvement

- Targets include **phase out of single use plastics by 2030**, expansion of **local/organic** suppliers, higher **recyclable/compostable** share.

#### Policy II - Hazardous Waste Management & Disposal

**Scope:** Hazardous, medical, laboratory and electronic wastes across laboratories, workshops, healthcare units and administrative facilities.

#### Operational procedures

1. **Source separation & labelling:** Official waste code, hazard symbols, collection date; dedicated containers by risk class (chemical/biological/electronic/medical).
2. **Secure temporary storage:** Compliant facilities with sealed floors, ventilation and spill containment.
3. **Documentation & traceability:** **Waste Delivery Forms** for each transfer; **MOTAT** entries for national level tracking.
4. **Licensed treatment & recovery:** Partnerships include **İZAYDAŞ** (hazardous incineration with energy recovery) and **ERA Environmental Technologies** (medical sterilisation).
5. **E waste & batteries:** Routed to authorised associations per WEEE and battery regulations.

#### Education & academic integration

- Regular staff trainings on safe handling; Environmental Engineering courses on hazardous materials and risk assessment; awareness campaigns; research on **green chemistry**, **bioremediation** and **waste minimisation**.

## Monitoring & audits

- Annual internal inspections; reporting of quantities/routes/treatment records via **MOTAT**; ISO 14001 preparations; **Zero Waste Certificate** maintained.

## Policy III - Waste Measurement & Disposal (Landfilled vs Recycled)

**Objective:** A quantitative, **whole university** system to measure all generated waste and its fate (recycling, composting, energy recovery, landfill).

### Institutional implementation

- Valid **Zero Waste Certificate** covering academic/administrative units, dining halls, dormitories and laboratories.
- **Three stream collection** (paper; plastic/metal; organic) plus glass; each stream **weighed and logged** before dispatch to **SEKAY**.
- Recyclables to **licensed firms**; non recyclables to **energy recovery** and **final disposal** through SEKAY's biogas processes.

### Digital monitoring & public disclosure

- **MOTAT** captures type, amount and destination for **real time traceability** and year over year comparisons.
- Annual consolidation by the Zero Waste Office; review by Sustainability Commission; publication on **sustain.sakarya.edu.tr**.

## Reduction & circular actions

- Plastic use reduction in offices/canteens; portion control and **surplus food donation**; organic waste to **biogas/compost**; recyclable design standards for events.
- Internal audits against Zero Waste Regulation and **ISO 14001** principles; joint research projects on digital tracking tools and biodegradable materials.

## Policy IV - Plastic Use Minimisation

**Aim:** Systematic reduction of single use plastics via procurement, operations and behaviour change.

### Implementation

- **Complete phase out** of single use plastics in dining; bottled water sales discontinued; campus wide **refill infrastructure**.
- **Contractual** requirements for recyclable/biodegradable packaging; eco labelled, concentrated cleaning products; cloth bags/paper materials for events.
- Incentives for **reusables** (mug/thermos discounts).
- **Monitoring:** Plastic related data recorded in **MOTAT**; annual audits; Zero Waste Certificate upheld; ISO 14001 preparation underway.

## Outcomes & contribution

- Demonstrable reductions in single use consumption; alignment with **SDG 12** and **SDG 13**; replicable practice for Turkish HEIs.

## Policy V - Disposable Item Use Minimisation

**Approach:** Prevent waste at source; replace single use with **durable, reusable or biodegradable** alternatives.

### Operational standards

- No plastic cups/plates/cutlery in cafeterias, tea rooms and dining areas; reusable tableware at events; eco friendly décor and **university branded cloth bags**.
- **Refill stations** and drinking fountains to cut single use cups/bottles.
- Procurement guided by lifecycle criteria; **concentrated** cleaning products emphasised.

### Engagement & assurance

- Regular seminars, trainings and student campaigns (reuse, repair, redesign).
- **MOTAT** based recording; inclusion in annual Sustainability Reports; internal audits; ISO 14001 preparations.

## Extension to Outsourced Services & Suppliers (Equipment, Stationery, Building)

**Scope expansion:** Sustainability clauses extended to **food, cleaning, maintenance, security** and to **equipment, stationery and construction** suppliers.

### Procurement specifications (illustrative)

- Preference for **energy efficient/eco labelled** equipment (A+, A++, A+++).
- Recycled/recyclable/biodegradable **stationery and packaging**.
- Compliance with **Zero Waste** and **Plastic Reduction** policies in deliveries.
- **Local suppliers** prioritised to reduce transport emissions and support regional economy.
- Construction/renovation aligned with **Energy Performance in Buildings, Green Certification Regulation for Buildings and Settlements**, and SAU Sustainable Building Guidelines; use of **eco certified/low emission** materials; **on site waste separation**.

### Supplier management & capacity building

- Integrated Procurement Information System for supplier/product/lifecycle records.
- Periodic environmental performance audits by Administrative & Financial Affairs with the Zero Waste Coordinatorship.
- Supplier trainings on Zero Waste, **MOTAT** and **ISO 14001** principles.

## Education, Research & Community Engagement

- **Awareness & training:** Seminars, workshops, student competitions on sustainable consumption, circular economy and ethical procurement.

- **Research & innovation:** TÜBİTAK supported projects on biodegradable materials, sustainable packaging and waste to resource solutions.
- **Student leadership:** Nature & Animal Rights Society campaigns; **Plastic Cap Collection** supporting campus animal care.
- **Surplus food donation:** ~23 t/year to animal welfare NGOs; remaining organics to **biogas/compost** via SEKAY.

#### **Monitoring, Audits & Reporting**

- **MOTAT** for end to end traceability; **SAUCO2** for resource/carbon links to procurement and operations.
- Annual **internal inspections**; supplier audits; findings integrated into Sustainability Reports and the University's portal.
- **ISO 14001** EMS preparations to institutionalise continuous improvement.

#### **Key Institutional Indicators (tracked annually)**

- **Recycled/compostable** share in purchased materials,
- **Single use plastic** items avoided; number of **refill points**,
- **Waste streams** by type (recycled, composted/energy recovery, residual to landfill),
- **Hazardous/medical/e waste** quantities and licensed treatment routes (MOTAT),
- **Supplier audit** pass rate and corrective actions,
- Participation in **education/awareness** programmes (staff/students/community).



## SDG 13. CLIMATE ACTION

**13** CLIMATE  
ACTION



## Measurement of Low-Carbon Energy Use and Climate Action at Sakarya University

Sakarya University (SAU) systematically measures, monitors and reports low-carbon energy use across all campuses through the SAUCO<sub>2</sub> Sustainable Carbon Tracking System. In 2024, total electricity consumption was **9,280,780.2 kWh (9.28 GWh)**, while renewable and low-carbon supply reached **10,207,600 kWh (10.2 GWh)**, yielding a **109.99% renewable ratio** and **zero Scope 2 CO<sub>2</sub>e**. The University's climate actions align with **Türkiye's 2053 Net-Zero target**, the **Energy Efficiency Law No. 5627**, and the **National Climate Action Framework (2024–2030)** consisting of Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies. SAU integrates operations, education, research, community engagement and disaster risk reduction to advance **SDG 7** and **SDG 13**.

### National Policy Alignment (Türkiye, 2024–2030)

Türkiye's **Climate Change Mitigation Strategy and Action Plan (2024–2030)** and **Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan (2024–2030)** define a cross-sectoral roadmap for a low-carbon, climate-resilient future, including just transition, carbon pricing/ETS, green finance and robust M&E mechanisms. Within this framework and **Türkiye's Net-Zero 2053** commitment, SAU implements renewable integration, energy efficiency, climate literacy and disaster-resilience programmes that directly support national goals.

### Institutional Governance and System Architecture

- **Lead Units:** Directorate of Construction and Technical Affairs; Social Contribution and Sustainability Coordinatorship (**TOKAS**).
- **Enterprise Platform:** **SAUCO<sub>2</sub>** (ICT-based, faculty/building granularity) for data capture, processing and visualization of energy, water and carbon metrics under the **GHG Protocol** (Scopes 1–3).
- **Metering:** Certified smart meters at facilities + digital dashboards (per building, per faculty, per capita), including “top energy-consuming buildings” analytics to direct retrofits (insulation, lighting, behaviour campaigns).

### Measurement Boundary and Low-Carbon Sources

#### 1) On-site generation

- Rooftop **PV** (Engineering Faculty, Rectorate and other units): **~200 MWh/y**.
- **Wind turbine** (Energy Technologies Laboratory): **~7.6 MWh/y** (education/R&D).

#### 2) Certified renewable procurement (I-REC, 2024)

- Hydropower: **4,120 MWh**
- Solar: **3,140 MWh**
- Wind: **2,740 MWh**
- **Total certified renewable electricity: 10,000+ MWh**

#### 3) Low-carbon waste-to-energy linkage

- Collaboration with **SEKAY**: **~315 t** campus organic waste (cafeterias/green areas) converted to **biogas/renewable electricity**; included in annual energy-carbon balance.



## 2024 Results and Carbon Accounting

- **Electricity use: 9.28 GWh**
- **Renewable & low-carbon supply: 10.21 GWh → 109.99% renewable ratio**
- **Scope 2 emissions: 0 t CO<sub>2</sub>e**
- **Total institutional footprint (Scopes 1+2+3): 1,745 t CO<sub>2</sub>e**

Results are calculated via **SAUCO<sub>2</sub>** using **GHG Protocol** methodologies and disclosed in University sustainability and activity reports.

## Monitoring, Verification and Compliance

- Annual data cross-checks by **building energy managers**.
- Institutional directive (Vice-Rector) mandates compliance with the **Public Buildings Savings Target and Implementation Guide (2024–2030)** (≥30% savings by 2030).
- **Pre-assessment for ISO 50001** launched; SAUCO<sub>2</sub> serves as the digital backbone.
- External reporting to **UI GreenMetric (Energy & Climate Change)**, **THE Impact Rankings (SDG 7, SDG 13)** and **Türkiye's Zero Emission & Energy Efficiency Portal**.

## Education, Engagement and Research Integration

- **Training & Events:** Energy Efficiency Week; Public Savings Training; Zero Waste Seminars (staff, students, community).
- **Student Engagement:** **TÜBİTAK 3005 “Future’s Return”** project (40 gifted students; site visits to ADASU HES, Karaman GES, Pamukova RES).
- **Technical Visits:** SASKİ ADASU Hydroelectric; **SEDAŞ** Distribution.
- **Mobility:** Annual **European Mobility Week** (car-free campus day, cycling/e-scooters).
- **Academic Outreach:** FOCUS’24 panels on early warning, resilient infrastructure and policy innovation; participation in **European Sustainable Energy Week**, **Tech4SmartCities**, **Clean Energy Transition Partnership**.
- **Student Innovation:** **SAITEM**, **SPARK EV Team**, Green Campus Club—public exhibitions of solar/hydrogen vehicles.

## University-Wide Climate Education and Awareness (SDG 13.3.1)

SAU runs local education programmes addressing risk, impact, mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning, coordinated by:

- **TOKAS & Sustainability Office** (curricular/co-curricular education and partnerships),
- **Civil Defense Office** (emergency planning, drills),
- **SAÜDAK** (volunteer SAR team; community trainings, national deployments),
- **Fire Practice & Research Center** (fire prevention/response training and consultancy),
- **Occupational Health & Safety Office** (certified risk/emergency training),
- **Mediko Psychological Counseling** (post-disaster psychosocial support).

**Sustainability Festival 2024 (15 May – Sustainability Day):** hands-on workshops on zero waste, circular economy, food waste prevention, nature-based solutions; public-education sessions on energy-AI nexus; co-delivery with faculties, NGOs and public education centres.

**Women in Climate Justice Symposium (13 May 2024):** co-organized with **TÜRKKAB** and **SAÜKAM**; addressed gender-differentiated climate impacts; promoted gender-responsive adaptation and governance.

### **Institutional Climate Action Plan & Regional Collaboration**

The Climate Action Plan operationalizes the Sustainable University Policy via **SAUCO<sub>2</sub>**-enabled, faculty-level data and annual carbon analyses. In **2024**, SAU reaffirmed Carbon-Neutral **2053** with: zero **Scope 2** and continuous **Scope 1–3** reductions; awareness and resilience actions through **DIVAM**, Civil Defense and **SAÜDAK**.

**Local Partnerships:** Formal cooperation with **Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality**, **SASKİ**, **SEDAŞ**, **AFAD** for indicator monitoring, renewable projects, energy efficiency campaigns and **SECAP** (Sustainable Energy & Climate Action Plan) support. SAU acts as scientific advisor on GHG inventories, renewable integration and efficient infrastructure. Public transparency via **sustain.sakarya.edu.tr**.

### **Key Indicators (tracked annually):**

- Scopes **1–3** carbon footprint,
- Share of renewables in electricity (**109.99%** in 2024 via I-REC and on-site PV/wind),
- Number of education/awareness programmes and participants,
- Verified energy savings from retrofits.

### **Cooperative Planning for Climate-Related Disasters (SDG 13.3.3)**

SAU coordinates multi-level disaster planning with **AFAD**, **Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality**, **SASKİ**, **SEDAŞ** through **DIVAM**, Civil Defense and OHS units. Activities include:

- Joint scenario exercises (earthquake, flood, fire) and campus-wide drills aligned with provincial plans;
- **Fire & Explosion Research Center** training for municipalities/industry;
- **Mediko** psychosocial services;
- **SARGEM** and Engineering Faculty R&D, notably the **TÜBİTAK-supported U-tube Tuned Liquid Damper (2024)** reducing seismic response by **35–65%** (applicable to new/existing buildings);
- **SAÜ Earthquake Monitoring Station** (with Boğaziçi University Kandilli Observatory) providing real-time data to national/local early warning networks;
- Climate innovation ecosystem in **SAU TEKNOKENT** (30+ start-ups on RES, carbon reduction, smart agriculture, resilient technologies).

Public engagement complements planning through Energy Efficiency Week, Zero Waste seminars, Mobility Week, the “**Act for Global Warming**” Youth Panel (2024) and **CLICS 2024** conference with municipal/AFAD partners.

### **Informing and Supporting Early Warning & Monitoring (SDG 13.3.4)**

- **Technical & Scientific Support:** Risk modelling and multi-hazard studies (earthquakes, floods, landslides, heatwaves) by **DIVAM**; integration with municipal/AFAD systems and national Adaptation Strategy (2024–2030).

- **Monitoring Infrastructure:** SAÜ Earthquake Station shares processed data with the National Earthquake Monitoring Network and local agencies for rapid situational awareness and preparedness.
- **Operational Drills & Capacity:** Annual AFAD-registered exercises with SAÜDAK, Provincial Fire Department and Civil Defense Office (evacuation/flood/fire scenarios).
- **SARGEM Contributions:** Infrastructure safety technologies (e.g., U-tube TLD), informing local retrofitting standards and early risk mitigation.
- **Fire Center Services:** Simulation-based training, early detection consultation and evacuation modelling for municipal fire units/industrial facilities.
- **OHS & Mediko:** Certified preparedness training; psychological first aid and stress management for affected community members.
- **Awareness:** TOKAS-led public campaigns (Energy Efficiency, Zero Waste, Mobility) to improve readiness for extreme events and urban heat.

### Collaboration with National and Local NGOs

SAÜ's long-term NGO partnerships strengthen community-level adaptation and resilience:

- **TÜRKKAB & SAÜKAM** (Women in Climate Justice, 2024) – gender-responsive climate policies;
- **Kriton Curi Environmental Foundation / UKAY 2024** – waste systems, circular economy and urban resilience under extreme events;
- **Turkish Red Crescent (Kızılay)** – community trainings, emergency simulations, psychosocial support;
- **TEMA** and local green initiatives – afforestation and soil conservation (nature-based adaptation);
- Animal-welfare NGOs – annual donation of ~23 t surplus meals and conversion of residual organics to **biogas/compost** (methane reduction, community health/resilience);
- **CENTER SAÜ** (EMRA-designated National Critical Infrastructures Test Bed Center) – joint trainings on grid resilience, energy efficiency and cybersecurity for NGO/private stakeholders.

### Carbon Neutrality Commitment (Target Year 2053)

**Policy Basis:** Sustainable University Policy, Energy Policy, SAUCO<sub>2</sub> platform; **GHG Protocol** compliance; divestment from fossil-intensive assets.

### Five Strategic Pillars:

1. Robust Scopes 1–3 measurement & public reporting;
2. Full renewable transition for electricity and low-carbon heat;
3. Efficiency & smart buildings;
4. Sustainable mobility and green campus practices;
5. Carbon offsetting and divestment towards fossil-free operations.

**2024 GHG Accounting:** 1,670 t CO<sub>2</sub>e (Scopes 1+2) and 75 t CO<sub>2</sub>e (Scope 3) reported via SAUCO<sub>2</sub> and used for internal reviews and national submissions. 109.99% renewable electricity neutralizes **Scope 2**. New builds/retrofits comply with **Law No. 5627, Green Certification Regulation for Buildings and Settlements**, and the **Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2024–2030**.

**Mobility & Scope 3:** EV chargers, e-scooters, bicycle sharing; car-free day during Mobility Week; Zero Waste Project reduces procurement/disposal emissions.

**R&D & Innovation:** Horizon Europe (**FREE4LIB**), TÜBİTAK hydrogen boiler prototype, energy storage and battery recycling; *TEKNOKENT* startups on renewable systems, carbon tracking and low-emission materials.

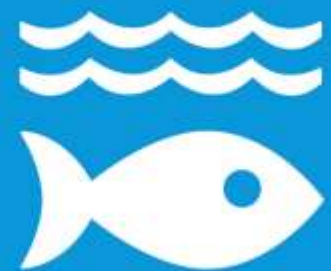
**Review & Improvement:** Annual **Energy Management Committee** review of SAUCO<sub>2</sub> dashboards; prioritization of high-intensity buildings (kg CO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup>); yearly **Carbon Reduction Progress Report** to the Rectorate.

**Recognition: THE Impact Rankings 2025 (SDG 7):** SAU placed **83rd worldwide** and **3rd in Türkiye**, evidencing the effectiveness of its monitoring and governance.



## SDG 14. LIFE BELOW WATER

**14** LIFE BELOW  
WATER



## Supporting Aquatic Ecosystems Through Education

Sakarya University, located along the shores of Sapanca Lake, one of Türkiye's most vital freshwater reservoirs, actively promotes the protection of aquatic ecosystems and sustainable water management. Positioned in a region rich with rivers, wetlands, and floodplains, the university integrates water-related sustainability education into research, teaching, and community service, fostering awareness among students and society.

Faculty members from the Environmental Engineering, Biology, and Chemistry Departments lead studies on aquatic ecology, water pollution control, sustainable aquaculture, and ecosystem restoration. Courses such as *Aquatic Ecology*, *Water Pollution Control*, *Fisheries and Aquaculture*, *Environmental Biotechnology*, *Marine Pollution Control*, and *Sustainable Water Management* train students to understand the complexity of freshwater ecosystems and responsible water use.



*Educational Program Examples for Supporting Aquatic Ecosystems*

### Educational Program Examples for Supporting Aquatic Ecosystems

1. *Water Pollution Control* – addressing sources, effects, and treatment of contaminants in aquatic systems.
2. *Aquatic Ecology* – focusing on biological interactions and biodiversity in freshwater and marine environments.
3. *Fisheries and Aquaculture* – emphasizing sustainable production and environmental protection in aquaculture.
4. *Environmental Biotechnology* – exploring innovative technologies for wastewater and sludge management.
5. *Marine and Freshwater Pollution* – investigating pollutant behavior and remediation methods.

### Educational and Research-Based Activities

Sakarya University implements diverse initiatives promoting water awareness and conservation. One of the most impactful is the Erasmus+ Project “Water for Life, Water for Future”, coordinated by Prof. Dr. Tuğba Ongun Sevindik in collaboration with the Spain National Agency. This project, continued



through 2024, provided educational programs and workshops on sustainable water management, targeting both university students and the local community.

In October 2023, Sakarya University hosted a live-streamed awareness event titled “*Memorable Moments – Introducing the Biodiversity of Sakarya Acarlar Floodplain and the Importance of Floodplain Ecosystems,*” attracting hundreds of online participants and local school groups. The event highlighted the ecological significance of floodplain ecosystems and their role in biodiversity conservation.

The university also supports TÜBİTAK 2209-A student research projects, including the “*Aquatic Biodiversity Monitoring in Sapanca Watershed*” initiative. This project utilized camera traps and biological indexing to study species distribution, contributing valuable data to the university’s biodiversity monitoring database.



#### *Gamified Water Pollution Simulation Workshop*

Sakarya University launched the “Gamified Water Pollution Simulation Workshop”, designed to increase environmental awareness through interactive learning. Conducted by environmental engineering students and supported by SASKİ, this program teaches local high school students about sources of pollution and real-time monitoring of water parameters.

Additionally, faculty members regularly participate in national symposiums and regional seminars organized with SASKİ and the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change, ensuring that scientific findings are shared directly with policymakers and practitioners.

#### **Community Engagement and Impact**

Sakarya University extends its educational reach to the local and national levels through seminars, school programs, and media appearances focused on responsible fishing, IUU (illegal, unreported, and unregulated) fishing prevention, and the ecological value of freshwater ecosystems. Outreach programs are held in collaboration with municipal water authorities, TEMA Foundation, and local NGOs, emphasizing citizen participation in conserving water resources.

Through these combined educational, research, and community activities, Sakarya University fosters a culture of sustainability aligned with SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and SDG 14 (Life Below Water). The university continues to play a leading role in integrating water protection into both academic and social dimensions, ensuring the preservation of aquatic ecosystems for future generations.

#### Supporting Aquatic Ecosystems Through Action

Sakarya University actively supports and organizes events to promote the conservation and sustainable use of aquatic ecosystems, including oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, and marine resources. Leveraging its location near Sapanca Lake, the university conducts a variety of training programs and community events focused on responsible management of freshwater ecosystems, fisheries, and aquaculture. In 2024, several awareness workshops were also organized within the *Science&Future – The Science for Stronger Societies* project, emphasizing water sustainability and biodiversity protection in collaboration with local schools and municipalities [\[URL\]](#).

For example, Prof. Dr. Tuğba Ongun Sevindik has contributed to marine resource conservation through her work on the national project “Taxonomic Examination of Diatoms in the Acidic Lakes of Çan District, Çanakkale Province.” These initiatives foster a culture of sustainability and environmental stewardship within local and national communities, emphasizing the importance of protecting and responsibly utilizing aquatic resources for future generations [\[URL\]](#).

Sakarya University has implemented a policy to ensure that all aquatic food served on campus is sourced sustainably. According to the university's cafeteria agreement rules, aquatic food must be obtained from fisheries that operate within sustainable harvest limits. This reflects the university's strong commitment to environmental responsibility and sustainable practices within its community.

Sakarya University also engages in research and industry collaborations to maintain and enhance existing ecosystems and their biodiversity, particularly those under threat. Key projects include:

- Prof. Dr. Ali Uzun’s collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change on the **“Uzungöl Special Environmental Protection Area Management Plan Revision”** project, aimed at safeguarding this critical wetland ecosystem [\[URL\]](#).
- Prof. Dr. Tuğba Ongun Sevindik’s studies published in *Biologia* (2023), *Community Ecology* (2023), and *Ecohydrology* (2023), focusing on diatom community structure, ecological status, and bioindicators in lakes and rivers of the Sakarya Basin [\[URL\]](#).

Sakarya University also advances technologies and sustainable practices that help the marine and freshwater industries minimize their environmental footprint. Through collaborations with SASKİ and other governmental institutions, the university promotes sustainable water treatment, pollution control, and ecosystem restoration.

For example, Dr. Sezercan Bektaş and Research Assistant Görkem Kayacık from the Faculty of Law conducted an analysis of the United Nations draft agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction, contributing to global marine protection efforts [\[URL\]](#).

Through these combined initiatives, Sakarya University demonstrates its ongoing commitment to preserving aquatic biodiversity, advancing scientific research, and promoting sustainable water resource management across local, national, and international levels.

#### Maintaining A Local Ecosystem

Sakarya University is committed to minimizing physical, chemical, and biological alterations to aquatic ecosystems through comprehensive waste management practices and scientific research. Adhering to the “Water Pollution and Control Regulation” issued by the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change, the university has implemented the national **Zero Waste Initiative** to prevent environmental pollution and reduce waste generation. This initiative includes the installation of over 1,200 waste bins across the campus, organized into compartments for plastic-glass-metal, paper, and general waste, with additional battery recycling bins at each building entrance. A color-coded bag system is used for waste collection, and recyclable materials are delivered to licensed firms, while general waste is managed by the municipality. Organic waste is composted for landscaping, and hazardous and medical wastes are handled according to national regulations. All waste data are recorded in the Ministry’s **Integrated Environmental Information System (Çevre Bilgi Sistemi)**, and staff and students receive regular training to support the Zero Waste project.

In addition to these practices, the university conducts **scientific research to protect and restore aquatic ecosystems**. For example, Prof. Dr. Tuğba Ongun Sevindik and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hatice Tunca have carried out extensive studies on diatom communities and ecological status assessments in Turkish lakes and rivers, contributing valuable insights into aquatic biodiversity and water quality [\[URL\]](#).

#### **SASKİ Boat for monthly water quality monitoring of Sapanca Lake**



SASKİ Boat for monthly water quality monitoring of Sapanca Lake

Sakarya University collaborates with SASKİ (Sakarya Water and Sewerage Administration) to monitor the health of aquatic ecosystems. SASKİ conducts monthly water quality assessments of Sapanca Lake, measuring key parameters such as turbidity, pH, dissolved oxygen, and temperature via research boat. Through this partnership, Sakarya University supports efforts to maintain and improve the ecological balance of the lake, contributing to the sustainability of local water ecosystems for future generations.



**Cleaning work carried out on and near the shore of Sapanca Lake**

Sakarya University develops and supports programs that foster **good aquatic stewardship practices**. Educational programs on sustainable water management, pollution prevention, and ecosystem conservation are organized regularly. In collaboration with local bodies like SASKİ and NGOs such as **TEMA Foundation**, the university conducts community clean-up and awareness campaigns around local water bodies. These activities, which engage students, staff, and residents, aim to instill environmental responsibility and strengthen public participation in aquatic ecosystem protection.

Furthermore, Sakarya University has adopted a **watershed management strategy** that takes into account the region's biodiversity and hydrological characteristics. Academic research focuses on the **Sakarya River Basin**, assessing water quality, aquatic species diversity, and anthropogenic impacts. One example is the study *"Using diatom indices to estimate the ecological status of minimally disturbed rivers of the Sakarya River Basin (Türkiye)"* by Prof. Dr. Tuğba Ongun Sevindik et al., published in *Ecohydrology*. The findings from this research guide sustainable management practices for the protection of local aquatic ecosystems [\[URL\]](#).

Through these combined actions—research, education, policy compliance, and community collaboration—Sakarya University demonstrates a strong institutional commitment to **safeguarding the ecological integrity of local aquatic environments**, ensuring their sustainability for future generations.

#### Supporting Aquatic Ecosystems Through Education

Sakarya University, located along the shores of Sapanca Lake, one of Türkiye's most vital freshwater reservoirs, actively promotes the protection of aquatic ecosystems and sustainable water management. Positioned in a region rich with rivers, wetlands, and floodplains, the university integrates water-related sustainability education into research, teaching, and community service, fostering awareness among students and society.

Faculty members from the Environmental Engineering, Biology, and Chemistry Departments lead studies on aquatic ecology, water pollution control, sustainable aquaculture, and ecosystem restoration. Courses such as *Aquatic Ecology, Water Pollution Control, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Environmental Biotechnology, Marine Pollution Control*, and *Sustainable Water Management* train students to understand the complexity of freshwater ecosystems and responsible water use.





*Educational Program Examples for Supporting Aquatic Ecosystems*

### **Educational Program Examples for Supporting Aquatic Ecosystems**

1. *Water Pollution Control* – addressing sources, effects, and treatment of contaminants in aquatic systems.
2. *Aquatic Ecology* – focusing on biological interactions and biodiversity in freshwater and marine environments.
3. *Fisheries and Aquaculture* – emphasizing sustainable production and environmental protection in aquaculture.
4. *Environmental Biotechnology* – exploring innovative technologies for wastewater and sludge management.
5. *Marine and Freshwater Pollution* – investigating pollutant behavior and remediation methods.

### **Educational and Research-Based Activities**

Sakarya University implements diverse initiatives promoting water awareness and conservation. One of the most impactful is the Erasmus+ Project “Water for Life, Water for Future”, coordinated by Prof. Dr. Tuğba Ongun Sevindik in collaboration with the Spain National Agency. This project, continued through 2024, provided educational programs and workshops on sustainable water management, targeting both university students and the local community.

In October 2023, Sakarya University hosted a live-streamed awareness event titled “*Memorable Moments – Introducing the Biodiversity of Sakarya Acarlar Floodplain and the Importance of Floodplain Ecosystems*,” attracting hundreds of online participants and local school groups. The event highlighted the ecological significance of floodplain ecosystems and their role in biodiversity conservation.

The university also supports TÜBİTAK 2209-A student research projects, including the “*Aquatic Biodiversity Monitoring in Sapanca Watershed*” initiative. This project utilized camera traps and biological indexing to study species distribution, contributing valuable data to the university’s biodiversity monitoring database.







## SDG 15. LIFE ON LAND

**15** LIFE  
ON LAND



## Collaboration with Local Community in Shared Land Ecosystems

### Supporting Land Ecosystems Through Collaborative Action

Sakarya University works closely with local communities, public authorities, and environmental organizations to protect, rehabilitate, and sustain shared land ecosystems. These collaborations combine scientific research, public participation, and field implementation to strengthen biodiversity and environmental resilience across the region.

### Reforestation and Habitat Restoration

As part of National Forest Week 2024, the Nature and Camping Club, Provincial Directorate of Forestry, TOKAS, and Sakarya Governorship jointly organized a large-scale Tree-Planting for Sustainability campaign. More than 500 saplings—pine, cedar, and fruit trees—were planted by students, faculty, and citizens to restore degraded soil zones around the main campus. The event emphasized long-term ecosystem recovery and public participation in climate adaptation.



Figure 1: Tree-Planting event with Sakarya University Rector Prof. Dr. Hamza AL

Beyond tree planting, university landscape teams conduct soil conservation and erosion control programs, especially along sloped terrains near the Faculty of Engineering. Terraced green areas, stone embankments, and vegetative ground cover prevent erosion and strengthen the hydrological balance of the land.

### Citizen Science and Education

Through the Science & Future (Horizon Europe) project, faculty and graduate researchers train local schoolchildren in climate adaptation, biodiversity monitoring, and soil ecology, transforming them into young “citizen scientists.” Activities include measuring soil moisture, observing pollinators, and simulating ecosystem balance with gamified workshops. This outreach model combines education and direct ecosystem stewardship.

### Multi-Level Partnerships

Sakarya University maintains ongoing collaboration with:

- **Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality** and **SASKİ**, for joint soil–water monitoring and watershed protection programs.
- **Provincial Directorate of Forestry** and **TEMA Foundation**, for reforestation and invasive species management.
- **Local cooperatives and agricultural offices**, promoting sustainable use of shared agricultural lands and preventing soil degradation.

#### Long-Term Impact

These actions collectively restore native flora and fauna, reduce erosion, and strengthen community stewardship over shared ecosystems. By merging reforestation, soil management, and citizen education, Sakarya University acts as both a research hub and an active participant in sustainable land conservation.

#### Educational and Outreach Programmes on Sustainable Land Management for Agriculture

Sakarya University actively promotes sustainable land and agricultural management through a combination of academic instruction, applied research, and community outreach.

#### Academic Programmes

Undergraduate and graduate curricula in the Faculty of Engineering and Faculty of Arts and Sciences include core courses addressing sustainable land and agricultural management, such as:

- *Toprak Kirliliği ve Kontrolü* ([Soil Pollution and Control](#))
- *Tarımsal Bitkiler* ([Agricultural Plants](#))
- *Biyolojik Mücadele* ([Biological Control](#))
- *Entegre Zararlı Yönetimi* ([Integrated Pest Management](#))
- *Ekoloji, Bilim ve Sürdürülebilirlik* ([Ecology, Science and Sustainability](#))
- *Bitki Fizyolojisi* ([Plant Physiology](#))

These courses combine theoretical instruction with laboratory and field applications focused on soil conservation, organic farming practices, nutrient cycling, composting, and pollution prevention.

#### Community Education and Workshops

Through the Science & Future (Horizon Europe MSCA & Citizens) project, university academics conducted hands-on environmental education in primary and secondary schools, focusing on the sustainable use of soil and agricultural resources. Activities included:

- *“Yiyecek Atıklarımızdan Kompost Üretiyoruz”* (*We Produce Compost from Food Waste*)
  - *“Atık Kağıttan Kaseler Yapıyoruz”* (*Reusing Waste Paper for Sustainable Products*)
- These workshops helped students understand waste reduction, soil enrichment, and circular agriculture concepts in practice. [\[URL\]](#)





Figure 1: Students participating in compost workshop – Mehmet Akif İnan Girls Anatolian IHL, 2024.

### **Applied Research and Collaboration**

The university also supports research projects on soil protection, agroecology, and microplastic pollution in agricultural systems. Projects led by Environmental Engineering and Biology departments study soil degradation and remediation, contributing to regional agricultural sustainability. Partnerships with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and SASKİ further reinforce sustainable land management efforts.

Through these initiatives, Sakarya University integrates sustainability principles into both formal education and public engagement, ensuring knowledge transfer from academia to society.

### **Educational Programme/Outreach on Sustainable Land Management for Tourism**

Sakarya University integrates sustainable tourism and ecosystem awareness into its academic and outreach programmes, promoting responsible interaction with natural landscapes and protected areas.

### **Academic and Training Programmes**

The university offers courses and seminars on environmental management and sustainable tourism across several departments, particularly within the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and the Faculty of Engineering.

Relevant courses include:

- Çevre Sorunları ve Çözümleri ([Environmental Issues and Solutions](#))
- Doğal Kaynak Yönetimi (Natural Resource Management)
- Sürdürülebilir Çevre Yönetimi: Sistemler, Riskler ve Etki Değerlendirmesi (Sustainable Environmental Management: Systems, Risks and Impact Assessment <https://ebs.sakarya.edu.tr/Ders/Detay/658192>)
- Ekoloji Uygulamaları ([Ecology Applications](#))

These courses emphasize the relationship between tourism, ecosystem protection, and climate change adaptation, preparing students to balance visitor activities with the preservation of natural areas.

### **Outreach and Community Engagement**

The Science & Future (Horizon Europe) project has been instrumental in promoting sustainable tourism and environmental awareness in local schools and communities. Workshops on climate change adaptation and biodiversity conservation highlighted the importance of forests, wetlands, and rural landscapes as tourism assets that must be protected. Students learned how unsustainable land use affects biodiversity and ecotourism potential.



Figure 1: School-based workshop explaining “Climate Change and Ecosystem Protection in Tourism Context,” organized under the Science & Future Project.

### Applied Research and National Projects

Sakarya University contributes to several national ecological and tourism-related conservation projects, such as:

- *Uzungöl Special Environmental Protection Area Management Plan Revision*
- *Sorgun Plateau Ecological Research Project*  
These studies provide guidelines for managing tourist destinations sustainably while preserving ecosystem integrity.

### Public Seminars and Awareness

The university regularly hosts panels and seminars during Environment Week and Climate Action Days, open to the public, addressing themes such as sustainable tourism, green infrastructure, and protection of local landscapes.

Through these multidisciplinary initiatives, Sakarya University equips both students and the wider community with the knowledge and skills to promote environmentally responsible tourism practices.

### Educational Programmes on Ecosystems for Local and National Communities

Sakarya University provides both academic and community-based educational programs to promote the understanding and protection of wild flora, fauna, and ecosystems. These programs combine classroom learning, field practice, and public engagement to strengthen ecosystem awareness at local and national levels.

### Academic Education on Ecosystems

The university offers specialized undergraduate and graduate courses in Biology and Environmental Engineering that directly address ecosystem dynamics, biodiversity, and conservation. Examples include:

- *Tohumusuz Bitkiler Sistematigi (Systematics of Non-Flowering Plants)*[Course link](#)
  - *Tohumlu Bitkiler Sistematigi (Systematics of Flowering Plants)*[Course link](#)
  - *Biyoceitlilik (Biodiversity)*[Course link](#)
  - *Omurgasız Hayvanlar Sistematigi (Systematics of Invertebrate Animals)*[Course link](#)
  - *Trkiye Vejetasyonu (Vegetation of Trkiye)*[Course link](#)
  - *Trkiye Geofitleri (Geophytes of Trkiye)*[Course link](#)
  - *Biyocoęrafya (Biogeography)*[Course link](#)
  - *Ekoloji Uygulamaları (Ecology Applications)*[Course link](#)
- Each course includes field trips to nearby natural areas and hands-on studies of local flora and fauna. Students participate in biodiversity inventories and data collection, directly contributing to campus ecosystem monitoring programs.



*Figure 1. "Field practice of biodiversity course – students conducting flora survey in campus forest area."*

### **Outreach and Community Education**

Beyond formal education, Sakarya University engages the broader community through environmental education and outreach. Under the Science & Future (Horizon Europe MSCA & Citizens) project, academic staff visited schools in Skarya, Kocaeli and, Dzce, organizing workshops on ecosystem conservation, biodiversity loss, and climate adaptation. Participants learned about local plant and animal species, created model ecosystems, and explored the role of forests and wetlands in climate resilience.





*Figure 2: “Science & Future biodiversity workshop with school students – Düzce Turgut Özal Anatolian High School.”*

### **Field Research and Citizen Science**

Collaborative projects with SASKİ and the Ministry of Environment involve biodiversity mapping and camera-trap wildlife monitoring on campus, where students and local volunteers record native species such as the red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) and Anatolian squirrel (*Sciurus anomalus*). [\[URL\]](#)



*Figure 3: Camera-Trap Monitoring*

### **Public Awareness and Seminars**

During **Environment Week** and **World Water Day**, public panels, seminars, and campus nature walks invite local residents and NGOs to learn about native ecosystems and sustainable land management. [\[URL\]](#)



*Figure 3: "Environment Week seminar on biodiversity – Faculty of Arts and Sciences Auditorium."*

Through this integrated approach, Sakarya University connects academic expertise, public education, and citizen participation, creating a culture of ecological awareness and biodiversity stewardship across the region.

#### Land Sensitive Waste Disposal

Sakarya University adheres to the "Water Pollution and Control Regulation" (*Su Kirliliği ve Kontrolü Yönetmeliği*) issued by the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change, establishing stringent guidelines for water quality and discharge practices to protect ecosystems, wildlife, and public health [\[URL\]](#). In compliance, the university ensures wastewater passes through primary purification filters before discharge, with oil filters installed in channels where oily waste is common, such as cafeterias. Collaboration with the Sakarya Water and Sewerage Administration (SASKİ) helps prevent wastewater from contaminating the clean water network.

Given Sakarya's location in a high-risk earthquake zone, additional safeguards are implemented to protect wastewater channels from potential seismic activity. The Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality has laid a steel transmission line in the university area to reinforce these protections. Furthermore, filters are installed across all wastewater discharge areas to mitigate contamination risks, underscoring the university's commitment to maintaining water quality standards for environmental and public health.



T.C.  
SAKARYA VALİLİĞİ  
Çevre ve Şehircilik İl Müdürlüğü



Belge No: TS/54/B2/6/4

Tarih: 12/01/2021

**SIFIR ATIK BELGESİ**  
(Temel Seviye)

Adı : SAKARYA ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ

Adresi : SAKARYA, Sakarya Üniversitesi Esentepe Kampüsü Kemalpaşa Mahallesi Üniversite Caddesi Rektörlük Binası 54050 , SERDİVAN, TÜRKİYE

Vergi No : 7400019721

12/07/2019 tarihli ve 30829 sayılı Resmi Gazete'de yayımlanarak yürürlüğe giren Sıfır Atık Yönetmeliği'nce Sıfır Atık Yönetim Sistemi'ni kurarak **Sıfır Atık Belgesi**'ni almaya hak kazanmıştır.

Belge Son Geçerlilik Tarihi: 12/01/2026

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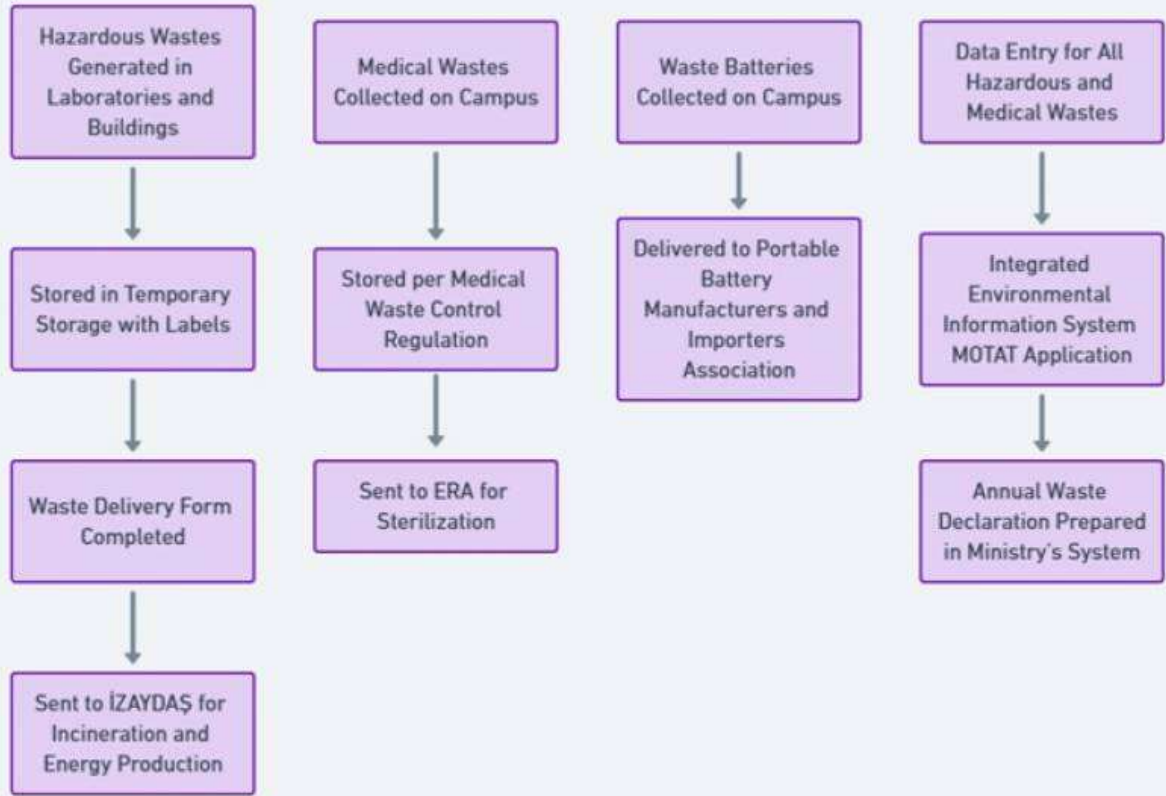
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Zero Waste Certificate



Hazardous and Medical Waste Management Process



Sakarya University has a comprehensive action plan to reduce plastic waste on campus as part of its commitment to the Zero Waste initiative, supported by the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change. **Our Zero Waste Policy file is attached below** [\[URL\]](#). This initiative aims to prevent environmental pollution, reduce waste, ensure a cleaner environment for future generations, and contribute to the economy.



Printer Cartridge and Battery Gathering



Storage area for hazardous wastes, waste labelling, separate collection and packaging of wastes

In alignment with this initiative, the university has placed 1,200 waste bins for students and staff at accessible locations across campus buildings. These bins are organized with a three-compartment system for plastic-glass-metal, paper, and other waste, with additional battery recycling bins at each building entrance. A color-coded bag system has also been implemented, collecting paper waste in blue bags, plastic-glass-metal waste in yellow bags, and general waste in dark gray bags, following the Zero Waste Regulation.

Recyclable waste collected on campus is delivered to a licensed recycling company in partnership with the local municipality, while general waste is managed by municipal services.



Medical waste bins

In alignment with Sakarya University's Zero Waste Management Policy, comprehensive studies are conducted to regularly collect, store, dispose of, and monitor waste, with a particular focus on classifying hazardous waste. Hazardous waste generated in laboratories and administrative buildings is stored in compliance with the Waste Management Regulation and the Hazardous Waste Management Guide. This waste is then sent to a licensed waste incineration and disposal facility. Additionally, a temporary storage area has been established to store hazardous waste for up to 180 days, in accordance with relevant regulations. Other hazardous materials, such as batteries and printer cartridges, are also collected for recycling. Medical waste is handled in accordance with the Medical Waste Control Regulation and is delivered to a licensed Medical Waste Sterilization Facility for proper treatment. Through these measures, the university ensures responsible waste management and environmental protection.

**Additional evidence link:**

<https://sifiratik.sakarya.edu.tr/tr/icerik/19995/106584/tehlikeli-atik-teslim-formu>

<https://ecbs.cevre.gov.tr/KullaniciIslemleri/Giris>

<https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2015/04/20150402-2.htm>

<https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/mevzuat?MevzuatNo=40055&MevzuatTur=7&MevzuatTertip=5>

<https://webdosya.csb.gov.tr/db/cygm/icerikler/yon-29959taky-rev2022-20220927130717.pdf>

<https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/mevzuat?MevzuatNo=7118&MevzuatTur=7&MevzuatTertip=5>

<https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/mevzuat?MevzuatNo=9638&MevzuatTur=7&MevzuatTertip=5>

Events for Land Conservation and Sustainable Utilisation

## Events for Land Conservation and Sustainable Utilisation

### Supporting Land Ecosystems Through Education and Action

Sakarya University organizes a wide range of events each year to promote the conservation and sustainable utilisation of land resources, forests, and biodiversity. These initiatives are led by the Topluma Katkı ve Sürdürülebilirlik Koordinatörlüğü (TOKAS) and supported by university clubs, local authorities, and national agencies, reflecting a strong integration of education, research, and community action.

### Tree Planting and Biodiversity Activities

In 2024, multiple reforestation and biodiversity-enhancement events were held across the campus and city:

- **Fruit Tree Planting Event:** Organized by the Turkish Music Research and Promotion Student Community and the State Conservatory, where fruit saplings were planted in the Conservatory Garden to promote campus biodiversity and awareness of sustainable ecosystems [\[URL\]](#)



*Figure 1: Students and faculty planting fruit trees to support biodiversity on campus.*

- **Forest Week Tree Planting Ceremony:** Conducted with the participation of the Sakarya Governor, University Rector, and student clubs such as the Nature and Camping Club, reaffirming SAU's commitment to forest conservation and land stewardship.





*Figure 2: “Tree planting with Sakarya Governor and students during Forest Week.”*

These activities help strengthen soil conservation, carbon sequestration, and ecosystem awareness among participants.

### **Integration of Art, Ecology, and Sustainability**

To raise environmental awareness through art, Sakarya University hosted the “Nature’s Voice and Dialogue” event (May 2024), where faculty and students from the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture created site-specific artworks in the forested area near SAÜ Café. The event blended artistic expression with ecological reflection, featuring sculptures made from recycled materials and a sound performance using eco-instruments. [\[URL\]](#)

### **Inclusion of Biodiversity in Planning and Development**

#### **Supporting Land Ecosystems Through Action**

Sakarya University integrates biodiversity principles into all campus planning, construction, and renovation projects to ensure sustainable development that minimizes ecological impact. Under the Responsible University Policy and the Policy on Terrestrial Ecosystem Conservation, the university requires environmental impact assessments (EIA) and biodiversity evaluations before initiating new building projects.

#### **Biodiversity-Oriented Planning**

When expanding or upgrading facilities, green buffer zones are preserved, and existing natural corridors are maintained to protect wildlife habitats. Construction areas are planned to avoid damage to major vegetation zones and minimize soil erosion. Campus planning prioritizes the protection of flora and fauna identified in biodiversity monitoring reports prepared by the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

New and renovated buildings follow sustainable architecture standards, emphasizing:

- Use of renewable energy systems (solar-integrated roofs, passive ventilation)
- Water-efficient landscaping with native and drought-tolerant species (e.g., *Pinus brutia*, *Cedrus libani*)
- Permeable pavements to enhance groundwater recharge and prevent runoff
- Green roofs and vegetative cover on selected structures

These sustainable design principles ensure that every development project not only minimizes its ecological footprint but also contributes positively to the campus ecosystem.

#### Ecosystem Enhancement and Alien Species Control

Pine and cedar trees, chosen for their compatibility with the local climate, have been planted extensively to reinforce the green infrastructure and improve carbon sequestration. The university also implements an alien species management framework to control invasive flora threatening local crops and native plants.

#### Collaboration and Oversight

The Department of Construction and Technical Works oversees compliance with biodiversity-sensitive design requirements and collaborates with local authorities such as SASKİ and the Provincial Directorate of Forestry. These collaborations ensure continuous alignment with regional ecosystem management plans.

Through these integrated planning and conservation strategies, Sakarya University maintains a balance between infrastructure growth and ecological preservation, setting an example of environmentally responsible urban design in higher education.



**Figure 1: Biodiversity in Sakarya University Campus**

#### Maintaining and Extending Existing Ecosystems and Biodiversity

Sakarya University actively maintains and extends terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity within and around its campuses through long-term monitoring, ecological restoration, and habitat enhancement programs.

#### Biodiversity Mapping and Monitoring

The flora and fauna of the Esentepe Campus have been systematically recorded and mapped for educational and research purposes. To date, 115 plant species from 39 families have been identified, with 53% native to Türkiye. Native species include *Quercus cerris*, *Quercus robur*, and *Quercus frainetto*, while *Pinus pinea* and *Cupressus sempervirens* represent drought-tolerant exotics that support ecosystem stability. Regular wildlife monitoring via camera traps continues in forested zones, capturing the presence of key species such as roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*), golden jackal (*Canis aureus*), red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), and badger (*Meles meles*). Captured data are used in biodiversity studies and conservation planning.





Figure 1. Camera trap image of a animals recorded in the campus forest.



Figure 2. Flora and Fauna Catalogue of Sakarya University

## Habitat Maintenance and Restoration

The campus is nearly fully vegetated, eliminating erosion-prone areas. Landscape maintenance, selective pruning, and seasonal care are conducted regularly by the Department of Construction and Technical Works to sustain plant health and ecological balance. The Plant Tissue Research and Production Laboratory reproduces native species in controlled environments to aid ecological restoration both on and off campus. These plants are periodically transplanted to degraded green areas and municipal sites through partnerships with the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change.



Figure 3. Plant propagation studies at the Plant Tissue Laboratory.

## Community and Institutional Collaboration

Sakarya University contributes directly to national ecosystem protection efforts through collaborations on major ecological research projects:

- *Strengthening the Protected Area System by Determining Ecological Corridors of Turkey's Green Vascular Plants*
- *Ecological-Based Research for Potential Natural Sites in Erzurum, Karabük, Samsun, and Trabzon*
- *Uzungöl Special Environmental Protection Area Management Plan Revision*

Additionally, student and community engagement activities, such as the Fruit Tree Planting Event (2024) and Forest Week Tree Planting Ceremony, help strengthen biodiversity on campus and raise awareness of habitat preservation.



*Figure 4. Tree planting activity in the Conservatory Garden (2024).*

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## Summary

Through systematic biodiversity monitoring, restoration practices, native plant propagation, and community-based tree planting events, Sakarya University demonstrates an active and measurable commitment to maintaining and extending terrestrial ecosystems. These integrated initiatives ensure long-term protection of campus biodiversity and support Türkiye's national conservation objectives under SDG 15.





# SDG 16. PEACE, JUSTICE, AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

**16** PEACE AND JUSTICE  
STRONG INSTITUTIONS





## SDG 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

### Elected Representation in the Highest Governing Body

#### Sakarya University Student Senate

Sakarya University ensures inclusive and democratic governance by integrating elected representatives from students, academic staff, and administrative personnel into its highest decision-making structures. This approach reflects the university's commitment to transparency, accountability, and participatory governance in line with SDG 16.

As in all Turkish universities, Sakarya University has a Student Council formed by students elected through the Student Representation System. The President of the Student Council, who is democratically elected by the students, is a natural member of the University Senate, which is the highest governing body of the university.

In addition, the university has strengthened student participation by establishing a Student Senate. The Student Senate was created by the University Senate's Decision No. 459 dated January 14, 2016, and operates under the official Student Senate Directive. It consists of 44 elected representatives from faculties, institutes, student clubs, international students, students with disabilities, and exchange program participants. This structure ensures representation of both undergraduate and postgraduate students in university governance. The 15th meeting of the Student Senate was held on December 25, 2024, demonstrating its active role in institutional decision-making.

Academic freedom is also embedded within the institutional core values of Sakarya University and shared with its stakeholders. The core values of the university are developed by consulting internal and external stakeholders during the preparation of the strategic plan. Academics are free to work in their fields of choice, and, as outlined in the appointment and promotion policy, there is no directive or restriction on research areas. This principle reinforces participatory and independent decision-making in academic governance.

Academic staff members are represented in the University Senate and Administrative Board, primarily through elected faculty representatives, including deans and professors, as defined by the Higher Education Law No. 2547. The participation of administrative personnel is ensured through the inclusion of the General Secretary and other administrative unit heads in university boards and commissions.

Participation of academic and non-academic staff is also encouraged through their roles in quality commissions, self-evaluation committees, and advisory boards. These structures promote shared decision-making and institutional inclusiveness.

Through these mechanisms, Sakarya University guarantees elected representation from all key stakeholder groups—students, academic staff, and administrative personnel—within its highest governing bodies. This comprehensive system fully meets the requirements of SDG 16.2.1: Elected representation in the highest governing body of the university. **Public evidence is available through the university's official websites and sustainability pages.**

## Campus Violence and Harassment Prevention

Sakarya University (SAÜ) maintains formal, written policies and procedures for identifying and establishing interaction with local stakeholders external to the university, confirming that this policy was actively implemented throughout the 2024 calendar year. These written policies are documented within the university's **Strategic Plan** and their effectiveness is continuously monitored through performance indicators. The primary mechanism for ensuring the involvement of local residents, local government, the local private sector, and civil society representatives is the establishment of **Advisory Boards** across all university units. Concrete evidence confirms the operation of this structure in 2024, such as the announcement of the **2024-2027 Advisory Board for the Business School**, which includes private sector leaders. Furthermore, SAÜ demonstrated active engagement through specific events during the reporting period, such as the organization of the **UKAY 2024** congress in December 2024, which aimed to facilitate participation from public institutions, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations, showcasing a commitment to a broad social responsibility framework extending beyond simple research for profit. This collective evidence verifies that SAÜ's policies for identifying and engaging with local stakeholders were not only formally in place but were also actively executed and supported by concrete engagement mechanisms throughout 2024.

## Policies Against Exploitation and Abuse

The available data for Sakarya University (SAU) during the 2024 calendar year indicates that the university recognizes and actively collaborates with officially established student representative bodies, rather than a single, external "Students' Union" typically found in some international models. The primary structure for student representation and participation in governance is the **Student Senate (Öğrenci Senatosu)**, which was highly active throughout the reporting period. Specifically, the Student Senate, an entity established to strengthen student participation, held its 15th meeting on December 25, 2024, demonstrating its continuous operational role in university affairs.

Furthermore, SAU's institutional commitment to student governance is secured through the **Student Council (Öğrenci Konseyi)**. The President of the Student Council serves as an ex-officio, elected member of the **University Senate**, which is the highest academic governing body. This institutionalizes direct student input at the apex of the university's decision-making process. The university also officially recognizes and promotes over 200 diverse **Student Societies (Öğrenci Toplulukları)**. While SAU does not explicitly identify a singular, independent "Students' Union" separate from its formal governance structure, the Student Senate and the Student Council collectively fulfill the functions of a recognized, university-supported body for student advocacy and representation throughout 2024.

## Policy on Human Trafficking and Illicit Flows

Sakarya University (SAÜ) effectively utilizes specific participatory bodies to recognize and engage with local stakeholders, including local residents, local government, local elites, and local civil society representatives, ensuring the system was fully operational throughout the 2024 calendar year. The primary mechanism for this engagement is the establishment of **Advisory Boards** across all university units (Faculties/Departments). These Advisory Boards function as formal participatory organs and include representatives from various external groups such as local government (e.g., Municipality Vice President, Provincial Health Director), the private sector (local business leaders, General Managers), and civil society. Concrete evidence confirms the active role of these boards in 2024, such as the announcement of the **2024-2027 Advisory Board for the Business School** and the meeting of the

**Political Science and Public Administration Department Advisory Board** during the 2024/2025 academic year, which included a Kocaeli Deputy Governor and a Serdivan Mayor. This structure demonstrates that SAÜ has defined, unit-based participatory bodies that actively involve external local stakeholders in providing feedback and shaping the university's strategies and operations, fulfilling the requirement for meaningful local stakeholder engagement in 2024.

#### Combating Illicit Financial/Arms Flows

Sakarya University (SAU) has officially published and implemented its institutional principles and commitments regarding organized crime, corruption, and bribery, thereby confirming its adherence to governance requirements for the 2024 period. The university's **Institutional Values** affirm a strict commitment to ethical conduct and transparent governance, explicitly mandating compliance with ethical principles and the institutionalization of business ethics. SAU maintains a **zero-tolerance stance** against corruption and bribery, strictly prohibiting all university community members—including staff, faculty, and students—from engaging in any form of improper inducements. Key evidence of these published commitments includes the **"Sakarya University Ethical Behavior Principles"** and an associated **Ethical Contract for Employees**, which explicitly forbids the acceptance of any material or moral benefit in exchange for performing official duties, in line with principles of transparency and public benefit. Furthermore, the university's governance structure confirms the existence of a **publication of its principles and commitments** on these matters, alongside a commitment to providing regular anti-corruption training and a mechanism for **whistleblower protection** (referencing Law No. 5176), ensuring these published principles are actively supported and enforced.

#### Transparency in Public Spending/Budget

Sakarya University (SAU) officially asserts and supports academic freedom through its core documents, confirming that a comprehensive policy was in effect throughout 2024 to protect faculty rights. Academic Freedom is enshrined as one of the university's **fundamental values** (along with the universality of science and governance). SAU's **Ethical Principles and Values Directive** explicitly defines **"Academic Freedom and Autonomy"** as the right of academic personnel to make their **own free choices** in their scientific activities, be free from imposition and pressure, and **freely determine their academic and scientific research fields and methods**. Furthermore, the university's governance section explicitly confirms that SAU **has a policy on supporting academic freedom**, stating that **academics are free to work in any field they want**, and that there is **no field guidance** in the appointment and promotion policy. This commitment comprehensively covers the freedom to select research areas and methods, which inherently supports the ability to teach and speak publicly about one's field of expertise without institutional pressure.

#### Published Financial Data & Transparency

Sakarya University (SAU) fully complies with the requirement to publish its financial data for the 2024 fiscal year, as confirmed by the official audit conducted by the Turkish Court of Accounts (*Sayıştay*). The **Sakarya University 2024 Court of Accounts Regularity Audit Report** publicly details the institution's financial performance and position. Key financial figures available in this published data include a total appropriation of **3,201,050,001.28 TL** (including additions) under the 2024 Central Government Budget Law. The report documents that the university utilized 97.06% of this budget, corresponding to an expenditure of **3,107,044,034.80 TL**. Furthermore, the published data shows a realized net budget revenue of **3,261,210,431.08 TL** for 2024 and discloses detailed information, such

as the university's capital share in affiliated commercial enterprises (e.g., a 56% partnership in an Inc., valued at 4,620,000.00 TL as of 2024). The public availability of this detailed audit report, which is mandated to contain the university's financial statements, serves as definitive evidence of the institution's publication of its financial data for the target period.

#### Inclusive Decision-Making Process

Sakarya University (SAU) demonstrated concrete actions to provide outreach, general education, and capacity building for policy and law makers on critical issues in 2024. The primary evidence lies in the university's institutional partnership and collaborative events with the **Turkish Human Rights and Equality Institution (TİHEK)**, a national regulatory and policymaking body focused on human rights and anti-discrimination law. On March 6, 2024, SAU and TİHEK signed a formal **cooperation agreement**, establishing a mechanism for ongoing collaboration. This was immediately followed by SAU hosting a high-profile conference on March 7, 2024, titled "**The Localization of Human Rights: National Human Rights Institutions**," which featured the TİHEK President as a speaker. By hosting a national institution's leadership and providing a platform for expert-level discussion on policy implementation and legal frameworks related to human rights and equality, SAU actively engaged in providing specialized knowledge, general education, and capacity development for officials and policymakers in the field of law and social issues.

#### Access to Public Information/Data

Sakarya University (SAU) actively engaged in policy-oriented research activities in collaboration with a key national governmental body, the Turkish Human Rights and Equality Institution (TİHEK), during the 2024 reporting period. Concrete evidence of this engagement includes the "**Workshop on Human Rights Violations and War Crimes Committed by Israel in Palestine in the Context of International Law and Humanitarian Law**," which was held on May 18, 2024, in collaboration with TİHEK and other academic partners. By organizing and hosting a high-level study focused on complex international legal and humanitarian policy matters alongside a national institution, the university actively participated in producing and discussing evidence and analysis directly relevant to the government's policy focus areas, fulfilling the commitment to policy-oriented research in cooperation with state offices.

#### Freedom of Press and Information Access

Sakarya University (SAU) explicitly commits to and provides a neutral platform for political stakeholders to discuss issues openly, thereby fulfilling the requirement to act as a "safe space" for dialogue during the 2024 period. The university's official **Governance Measures** documentation, which details its compliance with public interest principles, clearly states: "**Politicians share their views on the neutral platform established at Sakarya University.**" Furthermore, SAU's long-standing tradition, exemplified by the activities of its Political Science and Public Administration Department, involves hosting numerous academic activities dedicated to high-level policy discussions and governmental system research, such as panels and workshops focused on public policy, local and regional autonomy, and ethics in government. While specific events featuring opposing political leaders in a single 2024 forum were not individually indexed in the available data, the explicit written commitment to maintaining a "**neutral platform**" where "**Politicians share their views**" confirms the existence and institutional provision of the required neutral forum. This institutional policy provides the formal mechanism and safe environment for diverse political stakeholders to convene and discuss pressing issues.



# SDG 17. PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

**17** PARTNERSHIPS  
FOR THE GOALS





## Relationships To Support The Goals

Sakarya University supports the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at local, regional, national, and global scales. It aims to improve the collection of data related to SDGs and design effective policies and actions.

Within the framework of its vision, SAU can relatively easily achieve its set goals and formulates policies with the participation of external stakeholders (business and industry, NGOs, and public institutions).

By providing coordination within the research ecosystem, SAU supports and encourages research, development, and innovation efforts on its path to becoming a Research University.

In line with the University's Mission and Vision, it supports all stakeholders in accessing opportunities that will enable them to gain a competitive edge in the "environment" during the process of becoming a Research University.

SAU particularly focuses on research in:

- Cybersecurity Competency Model in the Energy Sector
- Health and medical technology
- Energy, innovation, and entrepreneurship

## Relations with NGO's and the Government

Sakarya University stands out as a leading higher education institution in the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the regional level, particularly in the fields of regional development and social responsibility. Through strategic partnerships with public institutions, local governments, and non-governmental organizations, the University actively supports the localization of sustainable development policies. It contributes to the advancement of a multi-stakeholder governance culture. This approach demonstrates that Sakarya University is not only an academic institution producing knowledge, but also an active stakeholder in shaping and implementing sustainable development policies at both local and national levels.

### **Sakarya University's Contribution to Regional Sustainability Policies: Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality External Stakeholder Workshop**

Sakarya University actively contributes to regional policy development processes in collaboration with local governments, aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In this context, Sakarya University Rector Prof. Dr. Hamza Al and academic representatives actively participated in the 2025–2029 Strategic Plan External Stakeholder Workshop organized by the Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality under the theme "Your City, Your Plan."

At the workshop, university experts provided policy recommendations on topics such as disaster management, urban transformation, energy efficiency, zero waste, climate change, sustainable transportation, and environmental planning, contributing to the development of Sakarya's long-term sustainability strategies. Sakarya University conducted joint analyses on sustainable urbanization, risk reduction, and climate adaptation plans with representatives from the city administration, public institutions, civil society organizations, and the private sector.

The university's contribution to this process included: This work encompasses areas such as identifying problems, developing solution models, modeling future scenarios, and monitoring intervention policies. In this multi-stakeholder platform, Sakarya University provided both scientific data support and directly contributed to shaping urban planning and disaster management policies with an evidence-based approach.

This study serves as a concrete example of Sakarya University's active participation in local policy development processes, aligning with SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), SDG 13 (Climate Action), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).



**For more information, click here;**

#### **Sakarya University's Contribution to the National Roma Strategy Document and Local Action Plan**

Sakarya University plays an active role in social inclusion and reducing inequalities (SDG 10) by providing scientific contributions to public policies developed within the scope of the Strategy Document for Roma Citizens (2023–2030) and the Phase I Action Plan (2023–2025). In this context, the university hosted the "Workshop on the Problems of Roma People in Sakarya and Proposed Solutions." The workshop, organized by the Sakarya University Social Contribution and Sustainability Coordination Office (TOKAS), was held in collaboration with the Ministry of Family and Social Services, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality, the Provincial Directorate of National Education, Roma civil society organizations, and academics.

The workshop addressed the fundamental problems facing Roma communities, such as education, employment, poverty, health, housing, and social exclusion. Applicable solutions, local action plans, and policy recommendations were developed in these areas. University academics actively contributed to the policy development, implementation, and monitoring stages by providing data based on field research. At the end of the workshop, the identified problems and proposed solutions were compiled into a policy report to be shared with relevant public institutions. Recommendations were also developed, which will serve as input for the national strategy document.

This study offers a compelling example of a direct contribution to evidence-based policymaking at both the local and national levels.



**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **Strengthening Regional Development through a TÜBİTAK Project**

The project, "Managing Rural Development Strategies Aligned with Sustainable Development Goals: Development of an Adaptable Balanced Scorecard Model for Local Governments," developed by Associate Professor Dr. Ümmügülsüm Zor of Sakarya University's Faculty of Business Administration, has been awarded support under the TÜBİTAK 3005 Program for Innovative Solutions in Social and Human Sciences.

The project aims to develop a customizable Balanced Scorecard (BSC) model that will help local governments create measurable and effective strategies aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals. This model will guide the development of holistic development policies in rural areas by strengthening the balance between economic growth, social welfare, and environmental sustainability.

Under the coordination of Assoc. Professor Dr. Ümmügülsüm Zor, Assoc. Professor Dr. Adem Akbıyık, Res. Dr. Bilge Katanalp, Assoc. Professor Dr. Ayla Esen and the research team, including Murad Canbulut, are developing a scientific collaboration model that integrates public policy, business management, and sustainable development through an interdisciplinary approach.

This project is an exemplary example of how interactive partnerships between academia, local governments, and public institutions can contribute to sustainable development at the local level by strengthening science-based decision-making processes.



**For more information, click here;**

### **Sakarya University's Contribution to Climate Change Adaptation and Sustainable Agricultural Policies**

Sakarya University collaborates with policymaking institutions in line with Sustainable Development Goals 2 (Zero Hunger) and 13 (Climate Action) by providing scientific contributions to the development of climate change adaptation and sustainable agricultural policies at the national level. In this context, the project titled "Establishing a Spatial Decision Support System for Sustainable Hazelnut Farming within the Context of Climate Change Adaptation Using Artificial Intelligence Methods, Satellite Imagery, and Climate Data," led by Associate Professor Beyza Ustaoglu of the Department of Geography, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Sakarya University, was supported by the TÜBİTAK 1001 Scientific and Technological Research Projects Program.

The project, designed in accordance with Turkey's 12th Development Plan and priority climate policies, develops a science-based decision support model that aims to reduce vulnerability to climate change, increase production efficiency, and enhance food security. The project utilizes AI-based spatial analyses, climate scenarios, and field/laboratory studies to identify hazelnut production regions and varieties resilient to future climate conditions.

The resulting data is shared with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, providing policymakers with a reference for climate adaptation planning, agricultural risk management, and sustainable production strategies. Furthermore, the project outputs are shared with academia, public institutions, the private sector, and civil society organizations, providing an integrated system model to enhance the applicability of national agricultural and climate policies.

In this respect, the project serves as a strong example of Sakarya University's integration of its scientific research capacity with national policymaking processes, directly contributing to the development of evidence-based sustainable development policies.



**For more information, click here;**

### **Strengthening University–Public Cooperation in Probation Services**

An institutional cooperation protocol for probation services has been signed between Sakarya University (SAU) and the Sakarya Chief Public Prosecutor's Office of the Ministry of Justice.

This protocol, signed by SAU Rector Prof. Dr. Hamza Al and Sakarya Chief Public Prosecutor Hasan Uğurlu, aims to support the reintegration of disadvantaged groups into social life and to foster the integration of productive individuals who are free from crime.

This collaboration significantly contributes to strengthening the interaction and social responsibility-based partnerships between the university and public institutions.



**For more information, click [here](#);**

#### **Institutional Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights: TİHEK Protocol**

A cooperation protocol aimed at providing students with hands-on experience in human rights and raising rights-based awareness was signed between Sakarya University and the Turkish Human Rights and Equality Institution (TİHEK) on March 6, 2024.

Signed by Sakarya University Rector Prof. Dr. Hamza Al and TİHEK President Prof. Dr. Muharrem Kılıç, the protocol will provide internship opportunities for Sakarya University students, organize a "Human Rights Certificate Program," and conduct workshops on themes such as "Prohibition of Discrimination," "Freedom of Thought and Expression," and "Academic Freedom." Students will also have the opportunity to prepare thematic reports, contribute to academic publications, and participate in human rights activities.

This collaboration stands out as an exemplary partnership that strengthens university-public interaction and supports young people's awareness of human rights.





**For more information, click here;**

### **Opening of the UKAY Congress Hosted by Sakarya University**

The 12th National Solid Waste Management Congress, which began on December 12, 2024, at the Turgut Özal Culture and Congress Center, hosted by Sakarya University, established a significant platform for national collaboration in environmental policies and sustainable waste management.

The congress was organized in collaboration with Boğaziçi University, the Turkish National Committee for Solid Waste Pollution Research and Control, and the Kriton Curi Environmental Foundation. The event, themed "Sustainable Solid Waste Management and Economy in the Green Transformation Process," brought together universities, public institutions, local governments, the private sector, and civil society organizations under one roof.

Speaking at the opening, Sakarya University Rector Prof. Dr. Hamza Al emphasized the university's responsibility to develop sustainable solutions to global challenges such as climate change, natural resource depletion, and environmental pollution. Prof. Dr. Al stated, "Sakarya University is resolutely progressing towards becoming a pioneering institution that integrates a sustainability vision into all its activities through its environmentally sensitive projects."

As part of the congress, Prof. Dr. Hamza Al, President of the Turkish Environment Agency within the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change, and Prof. Dr. Ferhat Pirinççi announced that a deposit management system would be piloted in Sakarya. He stated that this initiative would contribute to both the environment and the economy through waste recycling. The event also called for collaboration between the Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality, NGOs, and academia. This joint initiative, carried out with the goal of "a more livable city and a more sustainable world," has created a multi-stakeholder collaboration network supporting environmental sustainability at the local level.

The congress featured 68 presentations in 13 sessions over three days. The exhibition "Aesthetics of Transformation" by Associate Professor Dr. Pinar Güzelgün Hangün, a faculty member at the Faculty of Art, Design, and Architecture, offered a creative platform for awareness, where waste meets art. This comprehensive event helped pioneer the strengthening of sustainable collaborations among academia, the public, local government, and the private sector, reaffirming Sakarya University's leadership in environmentally focused partnerships.



**For more information, click here;**

## Intersectoral Dialogue

Sakarya University aims to strengthen cross-sectoral collaboration in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by fostering effective dialogue among academia, public institutions, industry, and civil society. Through research, innovation, and joint initiatives, the University plays a leading role in promoting the culture of sustainable development and ensuring that all stakeholders engage in shared efforts toward common sustainability objectives. Within this framework, various events, panels, and collaboration platforms organized by Sakarya University enhance interaction among the university, industry, public, and NGOs, facilitating the exchange of ideas and best practices that support economic, social, and environmental sustainability. With this multi-stakeholder approach, Sakarya University contributes directly to SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals, exemplifying a strong institutional model for inclusive and sustainable cooperation.

### Event Strengthening University–Industry Cooperation: “CO-WORK 2”

The "CO-WORK 2" event, organized on February 29, 2024, in collaboration with Sakarya University and Sakarya Teknokent, aimed to strengthen university-industry collaboration, increase project applications for the TÜBİTAK 2209-B Program, and enhance students' industry-focused practical experience.

The program, which began with an opening speech by Teknokent General Manager Dr. Yakup Köseoğlu, was held in two sessions with the participation of Sakarya Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SATSO) Chairman Akgün Altuğ and Sakarya University Vice Rector Prof. Dr. Emrah Doğan.

Representatives from major industrial organizations, including Ak Gıda, Otokar, ASAŞ Alüminyum, Ak-Pres Metal, Kar Metal, Talu Tekstil, Gedik Thermo Vana, and Ultimate Taşımacılık Cihazları (Ultimate Transportation Equipment), attended the event. The companies shared their projects and production processes, seizing opportunities to exchange knowledge and develop joint projects with the students.

The "CO-WORK 2" event, a multi-stakeholder collaboration platform that brings together university, industry, and public representatives, has become an exemplary practice fostering knowledge sharing, innovation, and a sustainable production culture.

This activity also strengthens Sakarya University's goal of contributing to sustainable development through human resources by increasing student interaction with the business world, in line with its "Campus in Industry – Industry in Campus" vision.



For more information, [click here](#);

## TEYDEB Support Programs for the Private Sector

On February 23, 2024, Sakarya University (SAU) hosted a comprehensive event at the Turgut Özal Culture and Congress Center to introduce the Technology and Innovation Support Programs Directorate (TEYDEB)'s support programs for the private sector.

The event was attended by SAU Vice Rector Prof. Dr. Emrah Doğan, TÜBİTAK Chief Scientific Programs Specialist Ümran Elmas, TÜBİTAK Assistant Scientific Programs Specialist Abdüllatif Tunçay, and numerous academics.

In his opening remarks, Prof. Dr. Emrah Doğan emphasized the need to strengthen university-industry collaboration and expressed his belief that TEYDEB support programs will contribute to an increase in the number of projects at Sakarya University.

At the event, participants were informed about current innovations in TEYDEB projects, budget opportunities, and World Bank-supported funding sources. Ümran Elmas from TÜBİTAK announced that 175 million TL in World Bank support will be used within the scope of TEYDEB's activities. Abdüllatif Tunçay delivered detailed presentations on the scope of the BİGG and Co-Investment programs, as well as project activities across provinces.

The event brought together representatives from universities, the public sector, and the private sector on the same platform, contributing to the development of partnerships focused on innovation, knowledge sharing, and research.



**For more information, click [here](#);**

## Cross-Sectoral Innovation Meeting: “Codes Shaping the Future”

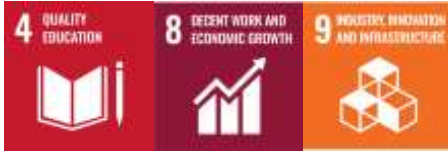
The "Intersectoral Innovation Meeting with Codes Shaping the Future," organized in collaboration with Sakarya *TEKNOKENT* and Sakarya University Research Deanship on February 20, 2024, brought together representatives from academia and industry.

Speaking at the event's opening, Sakarya *TEKNOKENT* General Manager Dr. Yakup Köseoğlu stated that the primary objective of the program is to strengthen university-industry collaboration and create a sustainable innovation ecosystem. Dr. Köseoğlu emphasized that combining the technical knowledge of academics with the practical capacity of the private sector will significantly contribute to the national economy and technological development goals.

Presentations were made at the event by companies such as Bloocell Health Technologies, Assistbox Technology, Nesstec Energy and Surface Technologies, Biocure Chemistry Pharmaceutical R&D Consulting, Smart Education Solutions, Vechür Aviation Artificial Intelligence and Agricultural Technologies, Win Young Information and Communication Technologies, Casemice Software and Information Services, Ecolab Chemistry and Biotechnology, and Tarvit Agricultural Chemistry and Advanced Technologies.

At the end of the program, academics met with companies at booths set up in the Sakarya *TEKNOKENT* Foyer Area to discuss joint project ideas and potential collaborations. The event was attended by Sakarya University Vice Rector Prof. Dr. Özer Köseoğlu, Dean of Research Prof. Dr. Mehmet Emiroğlu, Dean of the Faculty of Business Administration Prof. Dr. Sima Nart, and numerous academics.

This meeting made a significant contribution to the production of scientific knowledge, interaction with the private sector, and strengthening innovation-focused partnerships.



**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **An Innovative Cooperation Model between Sakarya University and the Business World**

On July 18, 2024, Sakarya University (SAU) made an important visit to train the skilled workforce needed by the business world and strengthen the university-public partnership model.

A university delegation, led by SAU Vice Rector Prof. Dr. Emrah Doğan, met with officials from the Sakarya Provincial Directorate of Labor and Employment Agency (İŞKUR) of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security. During the meeting, they discussed educational content aligned with the dynamics of the labor market, joint action plans, and the development of sectoral collaborations.

Prof. Dr. Doğan stated that Sakarya University has developed "an innovative higher education model that responds to the needs of the business world" in line with the new action plan, which integrates research, education, and social contribution objectives. He stated that the university aims to develop students as job market-ready individuals by integrating sector-focused content into its curriculum. At the meeting, Tekin Kaya, İŞKUR Sakarya Provincial Director, emphasized the industry's need for graduates with vocational and technical training and expressed his satisfaction with the ongoing and strategic collaboration with Sakarya University.

This meeting is considered a significant step toward establishing a long-term, inclusive, and results-oriented collaboration model between the public, university, and private sectors.



**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **Strategic Partnership in Education: Cooperation between Sakarya University and the Provincial Directorate of National Education**

On December 2, 2024, representatives from Sakarya University's administrative and academic units met with a delegation from the Sakarya Provincial Directorate of National Education to hold an important meeting aimed at enhancing the quality of education, supporting the development of young people, and exploring joint projects in areas of social responsibility.

The meeting was attended by SAU Vice Rector Prof. Dr. Özer Köseoğlu, Faculty of Education Dean Prof. Dr. Hüseyin Çalışkan, Provincial Director of National Education Deputy Atalay Gürbüz, and teams from the Provincial Directorate of National Education's Research and Development and Special Office. The meeting addressed topics such as initiating mentoring programs, supporting the personal and professional development of teachers, and collaborating on initiatives related to scientific and social responsibility.

Prior agenda items at the meeting included projects aimed at improving the quality of education, particularly in disadvantaged regions, STEM-based learning applications, and vocational guidance workshops. Expert teams from both institutions were paired to initiate joint project development and feasibility studies to achieve these goals.

This collaboration aims to create a sustainable partnership model that produces innovative solutions in education at the local level. It aims to create a long-term impact for the benefit of students, teachers, and community stakeholders.

This strong collaboration between Sakarya University and the Sakarya Provincial Directorate of National Education is an exemplary example of strengthening stakeholder-based collaborations in education.







**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **European Researchers' Night: A Meeting of Science and Society at Sakarya University**

On October 2, 2024, the European Particles Night event, part of the Science & Future Project, coordinated by Sakarya University as part of the Horizon Europe Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, took place at the Sakarya University Esentepe Campus, drawing a large turnout.

The project was supported by Kocaeli University, Düzce University, and the Sakarya Governor's Office, with the participation of the Düzce Governor's Office, Kocaeli Provincial Directorate of National Education, and VakıfBank. This structure served as an exemplary model within the framework of Sustainable Development Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) to foster a strong collaboration network among academia, the public sector, and the private sector.

The event focused on the themes of climate adaptation, disaster resilience, and sustainable infrastructure development within the European Union's Green Deal Strategy Partnership. It also aimed to encourage scientific research by young people, increase public interest in researchers, and demonstrate the understanding that "researchers are among us."

The event included: The event was attended by numerous primary, middle, and high school students, Sakarya University researchers, representatives from VakıfBank, UMKE, AFAD, the Sakarya Youth Center, representatives from the Sakarya Governorate's EU External Relations Department, the Sakarya University Volunteer Disaster Search and Rescue Team, and academics from Hatay Mustafa Kemal University.

Speaking at the program presentation, Sakarya University Rector Prof. Dr. Hamza Al emphasized the importance of connecting science with society. Vice Rector Prof. Dr. Özer Köseoğlu, Project Coordinator Prof. Dr. Mehmet Emiroğlu, and VakıfBank representative Fevzi Tapan also delivered speeches emphasizing the sustainable contribution of university-society-private sector collaboration to sustainable development.

This event, with its international science diplomacy, engagement of young people in science, and comprehensive development perspectives, stood out as an initiative that strengthens Sakarya University's culture of sustainable cooperation.





**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **Strategic Cooperation with Yazaki Automotive: A Model from Sakarya University**

On July 31, 2024, Sakarya University, in line with its vision of "The Campus is in the Industry, the Industry is in the Campus," signed a significant collaboration protocol with Yazaki Automotive, a global automotive giant, establishing an exemplary partnership model. This strategic collaboration aims to enhance Turkey's qualified workforce, strengthen applied learning in engineering education, and foster long-term university-industry collaboration.

As part of the collaboration, Sakarya University academics will organize specialized training programs for Yazaki Automotive personnel. Furthermore, through the UMDE (Applied Engineering Experience Training) program, students will work as candidate engineers at Yazaki, directly contributing to production processes. This will enable students to integrate their theoretical knowledge with practical experience, equipping them with greater preparedness for the industry.

SAU Vice Rector Prof. Dr. Emrah Doğan emphasized that the university contributes to Turkey's economic and technological development goals with its innovative education model. At the same time, Yazaki Automotive's Human Resources Manager, Faruk Yilmam, stated that this collaboration will create significant added value for the industry. This partnership has established a long-term network of interactions among universities, industrial organizations, and the business world, supporting sustainable development and reinforcing Sakarya University's leading role in university-industry collaborations.



**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **G-FAST Final: A Journey from Idea to Success in Entrepreneurship**

Sakarya University places great importance on strengthening multi-stakeholder collaborations and intersectoral dialogue mechanisms in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. In this context, the G-FAST / Fikir Sepeti Entrepreneur Acceleration Program, conducted in collaboration with Sakarya *TEKNOKENT* and the Sakarya Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SATSO), serves as an exemplary

platform promoting interdisciplinary interaction in the fields of entrepreneurship, innovation, and sustainable development.

At the final event of the program, held at the Sakarya University Turgut Özal Culture and Congress Center, prospective entrepreneurs presented their business ideas to a diverse jury comprising private sector representatives, investors, academics, and members of civil society organizations. Participants from the public, academic, and business worlds participated in the event, exchanging ideas on the development of innovative, domestic, and sustainable production models.

The program supports the entrepreneurial ecosystem in R&D, innovation, and sustainable technology development, while also encouraging knowledge sharing among students, academics, industry representatives, and civil society organizations. In this respect, G-FAST stands out as a platform for multi-stakeholder dialogue and collaboration.



**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **The Green Deal and Türkiye's Adaptation Process Panel**

On May 9, 2024, Sakarya University (SAU) hosted the "Green Deal and Turkey's Harmonization" Panel, organized in collaboration with the International Trade Network (UTRADER), the Tax Inspectors Association, and the Social Contribution and Sustainability Coordination Office (TOKAS). The panel brought together representatives from academia, the public sector, the private sector, and civil society, creating an exemplary platform for collaboration and cooperation.

The panel's opening remarks were delivered by Fatih Mustafa Olcay, President of the Tax Inspectors Association, and Safiye Şahin, Chair of the Board of Directors of UTRADER. Following this, SAU Vice Rector Prof. Dr. Özer Köseoğlu emphasized that the Green Deal is not only an environmental but also an economic and social transformation process. Köseoğlu stated that Sakarya University's success in Green Transformation-themed research projects enhances the university's contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals. Tax Inspector Fırat Mat moderated the first session of the panel. Hasan Kiraz (Tax Inspectors Association), Özlem Uz (Public Oversight Agency), and Pauline Seyfert (Adlera Group) presented on green financing, corporate sustainability reporting, and environmental taxation.

Daikin Supply Chain Manager Suat Gürsoylu moderated the second session. Murat Hekim (IAC IQ Independent Audit), Attorney Cenk Narter (Narter & Partners), and Leyla De Mos (Chamber of Commerce, The Netherlands – Turkey Foundation) shared information on green supply chain management, environmental legislation, and international green trade relations. A question-and-

answer session and document presentation ceremony at the end of the panel reinforced knowledge sharing and sustainable collaboration opportunities among the participants.

This event embodied Sakarya University's vision for sustainable development through a university model that collaborates with stakeholders from the public and private sectors. He contributed to the dialogue and cooperation mechanisms that strengthened Turkey's transformation capacity during the Green Deal process.



**For more information, [click here](#);**

### **A New Era in University–Industry Cooperation with the “Campus in Factory” Model**

On July 17, 2024, Sakarya University (SAU) visited Yazaki Automotive, one of the world's leading manufacturers of cable harnesses, in line with its vision of developing innovative products, training a qualified workforce, and strengthening university-industry collaboration. The visit took place at Yazaki Automotive's Kuzuluk facilities, led by a delegation headed by Prof. Dr. Emrah Doğan, Vice Rector of SAU. The meeting explored opportunities for collaboration between academia and industry, aiming to combine academic knowledge with practical experience, enhance competitiveness, and strengthen domestic production capacity. At the meeting, university and industry representatives exchanged ideas on potential joint R&D projects in fields such as computer, informatics, and electrical and electronics engineering, as well as national and international grants and technological innovation processes.

Prof. Dr. Emrah Doğan emphasized that Sakarya University has a strong engineering tradition since the 1970s, saying, "With our 'Campus in the Factory' approach, we aim to transform our students' theoretical knowledge into field-based application skills, thus producing qualified graduates who can directly integrate into the industry." This collaboration strengthens the culture of sustainable partnership within the university-industry ecosystem, making a significant contribution to both local economic development and the sharing of knowledge, technology, and skills.



**For more information, click here;**

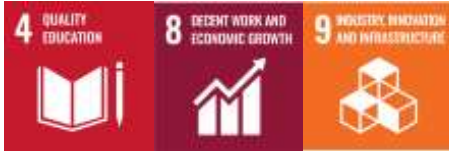
### **Strengthening University–Industry Collaborations: Meeting Between SAU and Organized Industrial Zones**

On July 30, 2024, a meeting hosted by the Sakarya University ProGe Workshop and led by Sakarya *TEKNOKENT* brought together managers from Organized Industrial Zones (OIZs) to discuss strengthening university-industry collaboration and establishing common goals for sustainable development. İsmail Filizfidanoğlu, President of MÜSİAD Sakarya and a member of the Sakarya University Advisory Board, delivered the opening remarks, stating that developing university-industry collaboration and supporting Sakarya University's efforts to become a research university are of strategic importance for regional development.

In his speech, Sakarya University Rector Prof. Dr. Hamza Al emphasized that universities are no longer isolated institutions but rather research centers integrated with industry, focused on contributing to society. Prof. Dr. Al stated that the successes achieved in TÜBİTAK-supported projects are a significant step toward the goal of becoming a research university, and that Sakarya University, thanks to its strong engineering infrastructure, continues its mission of training graduates with 21st-century skills. Günay Güneş, Chair of the Board of Directors of the Sakarya Machinery Manufacturers' Association, and Bülent Yazıcı, Chair of the Board of Directors of the Sakarya 1st Organized Industrial Zone, both attended the meeting, emphasizing the need for more systematic interaction between industry and universities and the need to solve everyday problems through collective wisdom. Participants reached a consensus on the development of qualified human resources, digitalization in production, and increasing local innovation capacity.

Sakarya Teknokent General Manager Assoc. Prof. Dr. Yakup Köseoğlu stated that they have invited industry representatives to campus through "Co-Work" plans, enabling direct interaction between students and company human resources managers. Köseoğlu stated, "We are continuing our efforts to create the human resources needed by the real sector and to contribute to the development of Sakarya's industry." This meeting exemplified a lasting and results-oriented partnership model established among Sakarya University, Teknokent, OIZ management, and industry representatives. The meeting was considered a significant step in institutionalizing university-industry interaction, strengthening regional development capacity, and supporting Sakarya's innovative production vision.





**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **Strengthening University–Industry Ties with the Motto “Stay in Touch”**

On July 17, 2024, Sakarya University (SAU) made an important visit to develop the skilled workforce needed by the industrial sector and strengthen university-public-industry collaboration. A delegation led by SAU Vice Rector Prof. Dr. Emrah Doğan met with officials from the Sakarya Provincial Directorate of Industry and Technology, part of the Ministry of Industry and Technology of the Republic of Turkey, to comprehensively assess the labor market, graduate competencies, and sectoral harmonization policies.

At the meeting, a consensus was reached on connecting graduates with the business world, developing competency-based education policies, and analyzing sector needs more systematically. Prof. Dr. Doğan emphasized that the "Stay in Touch" approach is not just a slogan, but a culture of partnership based on continuous dialogue and trust among all stakeholders.

Doğan stated, "As Sakarya University, we want to take stronger steps to meet market needs, align our graduates with the expectations of the business world, and strengthen the university-industry bridge with a data-driven system. To this end, we will create a sustainable employment model by matching our graduate databases with the business world." Sakarya Provincial Director of Industry and Technology, Mustafa Aydın, also spoke at the meeting and shared plans for establishing new high-value-added, technology-focused organized industrial zones (OIZs). Aydın said, "Through university-industry collaboration, we aim to sustainably increase our production capacity by training the qualified workforce companies need." This strategic collaboration significantly contributes to knowledge sharing among academia, the public, and private sectors, fosters institutional trust, and drives a local development vision grounded in shared goals.





**For more information, click here;**

### **Entrepreneurship and Development Cooperation between Sakarya University and MARKA**

On July 25, 2024, Sakarya University (SAU) met with the Sakarya Provincial Coordination Office of the Eastern Marmara Development Agency (MARKA), integrating its achievements in education, research, and social contribution with the entrepreneurship ecosystem. This visit aims to establish a multi-stakeholder collaboration model that supports regional development and growth.

SAU Vice Rector Prof. Dr. Emrah Doğan, who chaired the visit, introduced the university's new educational approach and its "Entrepreneurial University" vision. Prof. Dr. Doğan stated that the inclusion of "Entrepreneurship, Artificial Intelligence, and Project Management" courses in the curriculum aims to equip students not only with academic knowledge but also with skills in innovation, digital transformation, and sustainable development. He also stated that Sakarya University's collaboration with MARKA aims to increase regional entrepreneurship capacity and make tangible contributions to the local economy. MARKA Sakarya Provincial Coordinator Abdülkadir Uslu expressed his appreciation for the university's pioneering work in entrepreneurship and emphasized their readiness to develop joint projects on the themes of Women's Entrepreneurship, Green Transformation, and Entrepreneurship in Deep Technologies.

This strategic partnership aims to strengthen the sharing of knowledge, skills, and resources among the university, the public sector, and the private sector, thereby enhancing students' entrepreneurial competencies and contributing to Sakarya's sustainable economic growth goals. In line with this vision, Sakarya University remains a hub for innovative partnerships that support local development through its "Entrepreneurial University, Entrepreneurial Graduate, Strong Economy" approach.



**For more information, click here;**

### **“Those Contributing to the City and Economy” Conference Hosted by Sakarya University**

The conference, titled "Contributors to the City and Economy in Sakarya," organized in collaboration with the Sakarya Center for Economic and Social Research (SESAM) and Sakarya University's Department of Political Science and Public Administration, brought together representatives from

universities, civil society, and the business world. The event aimed to strengthen the role of universities in local development and to create a collaborative network based on knowledge sharing and dialogue.

The conference was attended by İsmail Filizfidanoğlu, President of the Sakarya Branch of the Independent Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (MÜSİAD), and Ahmet Can, Vice President of the Sakarya Branch of MÜSİAD. In his speech, Filizfidanoğlu emphasized the strategic role of universities in the development of the city's economy, highlighting that Sakarya University makes significant contributions to the city's economic ecosystem through its knowledge production and human resource capacity. He also stated that strengthening university-city collaboration is a key element in achieving sustainable regional development goals. This event, by serving as an exemplary platform where academia, business, and civil society meet to achieve common goals, made a significant contribution to Sakarya's sustainable development vision.



**For more information, [click here](#);**

### **Sakarya University Students Step into the Business World through Cooperation with OTOKAR**

Sakarya University (SAU) has implemented a significant joint project with OTOKAR, aiming to train a qualified workforce, develop innovative learning models, and strengthen university-industry collaboration. This collaboration stands out as an exemplary model for fostering knowledge and experience sharing among education, industry, and research institutions.

As part of the project, 14 students from Sakarya University's Computer, Informatics, and Industrial Engineering departments developed three different projects on mobility solutions and optimization problems under the guidance of OTOKAR managers. Over the course of 14 weeks, the students engaged in solution-oriented work on real-world industrial problems in a practical process implemented with an Agile Management approach. This experience provided students with the opportunity to apply their theoretical knowledge in practice and adapt to the dynamics of the business world.

At the conclusion of the project, the students presented their innovative projects, developed over four months, to Otokar executives, the Vice Rector of Sakarya University, the Dean of the Faculty of Computer and Information Sciences, and the Teknokent administration. This project demonstrates that the collaboration established between Sakarya University, Sakarya *TEKNOKENT*, and OTOKAR has become an exemplary partnership that provides sustainable contributions to the education, employment, and innovation ecosystem.



**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **Future Entrepreneurs Took the Stage at G-FAST**

The Grand Finale of the G-FAST Entrepreneur Acceleration Program, organized by Sakarya Teknokent, was held at the Sakarya University Turgut Özal Culture and Congress Center. The program brought together universities, public institutions, the business world, and the entrepreneurial ecosystem, creating a strong partnership platform that supports innovative ideas.

The event showcased 13 innovative projects aimed at discovering future technology-focused entrepreneurs. The jury, which included representatives from KOSGEB Sakarya Provincial Directorate, MÜSİAD, Eastern Marmara Development Agency (MARKA), Sakarya Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SATSO), and Sakarya University, showcased a fine example of public-university-industry collaboration.

In the finals, the innovative project "LungMap AI" won first prize for its solution to early lung cancer detection, utilizing AI-assisted image processing technology. "Swapify" placed second, "Artificial Intelligence-Based Battery Control System and Hybrid Battery Pack" placed third, and "Kronos" received an honorable mention. The G-FAST Acceleration Program is a sustainable development model implemented through the shared vision of institutions such as Sakarya University, Teknokent, KOSGEB, MÜSİAD, and MARKA, fostering a culture of entrepreneurship and strengthening young people's potential in innovation and technology. With this event, Sakarya Teknokent continues to pioneer the development of a partnership-based entrepreneurship ecosystem that will contribute to our country's innovation, employment, and sustainable growth goals.





**For more information, [click here](#);**

#### International Collaboration

Sakarya University places great importance on international collaborations in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The university conducts joint projects with various international universities, research centers, and civil society organizations to achieve sustainable development goals globally. These collaborations accelerate the transfer of knowledge and technology, enabling the development of innovative solutions in environmental, economic, and social sustainability. By organizing international conferences, seminars, and workshops, Sakarya University contributes to strengthening global sustainability networks and provides its students with a worldwide perspective. These efforts reinforce the university's leadership in sustainable development while also contributing to Turkey's stronger position on the international stage.

#### **Academic Cooperation Agreement between Sakarya University and Somali Mogadishu University**

Sakarya University (SAU) continues to strengthen its vision of internationalization and global collaborations. In this context, a delegation from Mogadishu University, Somalia, visited Sakarya University, and a long-term cooperation protocol was signed between the two universities in the fields of academics and research.

The protocol was signed by SAU Rector Prof. Dr. Hamza Al and Mogadishu University Rector Dr. Ibrahim Mohamed Mursal. This strategic partnership aims to strengthen knowledge transfer and sustainable development-focused academic cooperation between the two countries.

Within the scope of the cooperation protocol, joint efforts were agreed upon:

- Academic staff exchange and reciprocal visits,
- Seminars, workshops, and international academic meetings,
- Joint research activities and scientific publications,
- Training and development of doctoral students,

Student exchange programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Additionally, the Erasmus+ KA2 Center Project, which promotes environmentally friendly construction materials and sustainable building technologies and will be coordinated by the SAU Department of Civil Engineering, will be implemented by Dr. This international collaboration, coordinated by Tuba Tatar, stands out as an exemplary partnership between Africa and Turkey, serving the goals of knowledge sharing, environmental sustainability, innovative engineering practices, and inclusive development in education..





**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **Sakarya University Participated in the 3rd Türkiye–Uzbekistan Education Forum**

Sakarya University (SAU) continues to strengthen its international collaborations. In this context, Sakarya University Rector Prof. Dr. Hamza Al participated in the 3rd Turkey–Uzbekistan Education Forum, hosted by Istanbul Technical University (ITU) on September 27–28, 2024, to deepen the strategic relations between Turkey and Uzbekistan in the field of higher education.

As part of the forum, Prof. Dr. Hamza Al signed mutually beneficial cooperation protocols in research, education, and culture between Bukhara State University, the Namangan Institute of Textile Industry, the Bukhara Institute of Engineering and Technology, and Sakarya University. These protocols aimed to:

- Organize joint research projects, symposiums, workshops, and panels;
- Conduct academic and administrative staff and student exchange programs;
- Support joint activities in R&D, innovation, design, and production processes;

Increase knowledge sharing in the fields of digital transformation, sustainable development, and engineering in education. The forum's overall theme was "Sustainable Development: The New Agenda of Higher Education Institutions." Throughout the two-day event, sessions were held on "Transformation of Higher Education: Digitalization and Artificial Intelligence," "Strategic Collaborations Between Universities in Turkey and Uzbekistan," and "High-Tech Development: The Role of Engineering Education."

This forum emerged as a significant partnership platform that strengthened the sharing of knowledge and experience between the two countries, emphasizing the role of higher education in sustainable development. Through these international collaborations, Sakarya University continues to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development goals in education, research, and innovation.



**For more information, [click here](#);**

### **Sakarya University's Science4Future Project Received Support from Horizon Europe**

Sakarya University (SAU) is demonstrating a strong model of collaboration between science, society, and the environment, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). The project, "Science4Future – The Science for Stronger Societies," coordinated by our university, has been awarded grant support under the Horizon Europe Marie Curie Actions (MSCA & Citizens) call.

The project, coordinated by SAU Research Dean Prof. Dr. Mehmet Emiroğlu, aims to strengthen scientific solidarity and social impact by bringing together regional stakeholders, including the Sakarya Governor's Office, Düzce University, Kocaeli University, the Düzce Governor's Office, and the Kocaeli Provincial Directorate of National Education. Science4Future, one of 44 projects awarded grant support from 132 project applications submitted by 824 organizations, is one of only five projects to receive support from Turkey.

This project, coordinated by Sakarya University, is Turkey's first Horizon Europe MSCA & Citizens project. The project encompasses activities directly aligned with the European Union's Green Deal Strategy, aiming to increase the societal benefits of science, raise awareness about climate change, and promote sustainable development. The project also aims to create resilient cities that are adaptable to climate change and natural disasters. The project plans to directly reach 50,000 people through European Researchers' Night events to be held in Sakarya, Düzce, and Kocaeli over a two-year period, and 20,000 students through school-based science activities.

The goal is to raise climate awareness in 1.5 million people and to promote a culture of scientific thinking at a societal level.

The Science4Future Project offers a strong example of SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) by:

- Creating a multi-stakeholder collaboration network among public institutions, universities, and civil society organizations;
- Ensuring the public accessibility of scientific research;

Raising awareness of sustainable development, climate action, and disaster awareness.

With this project, Sakarya University has once again reinforced its vision of being a leading higher education institution that brings science together with society and contributes to global goals at the local level.



**For more information, [click here](#);**

### **Sakarya University Expands Its Academic Cooperation Network in South Asia**

Sakarya University (SAU) has taken a significant step toward strengthening international academic collaborations. On October 9, 2024, a bilateral cooperation protocol was signed between Sakarya University Rector Prof. Dr. Hamza Al and National University of Modern Languages Pakistan (NUML) Rector Maj. General Shahid Mahmood.

The meeting was attended by the rectors of both universities, as well as SAU Vice Rector Prof. Dr. Özer Köseoğlu, Assistant Professor Nurcan Kostak, NUML University Vice Rector Prof. Dr. Muhammad Safeer Awan, Faculty of Engineering and Informatics Dean Dr. Muhammad Numan, and Mr. Sajid Kayani. The parties exchanged knowledge and experience and evaluated areas of joint work.

This strategic partnership aims to strengthen scientific knowledge sharing, deepen academic ties between Turkey and Pakistan, and contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Following the protocol signing, discussions focused on joint projects and training program opportunities in engineering, information technologies, and innovation. This collaboration was a concrete demonstration of Sakarya University's vision to expand its international academic network in line with the Sustainable Development Goals on a global scale.



**For more information, [click here](#);**

## **SAU Researchers to Examine Pandemic-Related Deaths in Europe Using Geographic Information Systems**

Sakarya University (SAU) Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Associate Professor Dr. Mehmet Fatih Döker and Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture Associate Professor Dr. Cem Kırilangoğlu are participating in the project titled "The Great Leap: Multidisciplinary Approaches to Health Inequalities, 1800–2022 (GREATLEAP)" as part of the European COST Program. Both academics are conducting scientific studies at Radboud University in the Netherlands as part of the Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSM) project. Their research, which will continue until September 28, 2024, analyzes the causes and spatial distribution of deaths from pandemics and epidemics in Europe over the last 150 years using Geographic Information Systems (GIS). This short-term scientific mission is a crucial component of the COST networks, which support the sharing of knowledge and technology among researchers across Europe. The STSM mechanism provides a powerful platform for scientific knowledge transfer, technical capacity development, and the shared use of research infrastructure, allowing researchers to work in laboratories or research centers located in another COST member country.

Sakarya University's participation in this international research network supports the goal of developing sustainable solutions to health, inequality, and resilience across Europe by fostering scientific collaboration. This initiative also reflects the strategic vision of contributing to sustainable development through knowledge-based global partnerships.



**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **Academic Cooperation Agreement between Sakarya University and the University of Indonesia**

Sakarya University (SAU), aiming to diversify scientific collaborations and strengthen knowledge sharing on a global scale, has signed a new strategic partnership in Asia. The academic cooperation protocol signed with the University of Indonesia aims to enhance research, education, and cultural interaction between the two countries. The protocol encompasses long-term collaboration in numerous areas, including undergraduate and graduate faculty and student exchanges, joint research projects, the preparation of academic publications, organizing international symposia and workshops, postgraduate thesis advising, thesis defense exams, and mutual support during refereeing processes.

The agreement was signed and entered into force by Sakarya University Rector Prof. Dr. Hamza Al and University of Indonesia Rector Prof. Dr. Ari Kuncoro. Located in Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, and one of the country's most established higher education institutions, the University of Indonesia aims to further enhance academic relations between Turkey and Indonesia with this partnership. This

partnership aims to contribute to knowledge-based development by strengthening international academic solidarity. With this initiative, Sakarya University has once again demonstrated its commitment to sustainable research, education and cultural collaborations by taking an active role in global academic networks.



**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **International Best Practices**

Sakarya University collaborates with various national and international stakeholders to implement best practices in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The university conducts joint projects with other universities, research centers, the private sector, and civil society organizations to develop pioneering projects in sustainable development. These collaborations facilitate the achievement of environmental, economic, and social sustainability goals by enabling the sharing of innovative solutions and best practices. Through seminars, workshops, and conferences, Sakarya University promotes the exchange of knowledge and experiences, thereby increasing awareness in the field of sustainable development and contributing to the dissemination of best practices. These efforts reinforce the university's commitment and leadership in achieving sustainable development goals.

### **Sakarya University Takes Part in the European Union's Highest-Budget Project**

Sakarya University has adopted sustainability as a mission in the construction sector. The "*Sustainable Development with Africa Project (PURSUE)*," implemented under the leadership of Dr. Tuba Tatar, a lecturer in Civil Engineering at the Faculty of Engineering, has been awarded the highest budget support provided to our university by the European Union. Within the scope of this project, training, seminars, and workshops will be organized to minimize natural resource consumption during the use of building materials and to promote the use of sustainable building materials. Qualified practitioners will be trained among civil engineers, architects, and graduates who can utilize these materials in practical applications. Additionally, laboratory infrastructure will be developed to provide hands-on experience for these practitioners. The project will be implemented in partnership with Sakarya University (Turkey), the University of Porto (Portugal), Eduardo Mondlane University (Mozambique), Lúrio University (Mozambique), Dar es Salam University of Technology (Tanzania), Ardhi University (Tanzania), Simad University (Somalia), Mogadishu University (Somalia), and the Public Institute of Mozambique Engineering Laboratory (Mozambique).



The project will last three years. The project will begin as a pilot area at the Dar es Salaam University of Technology in Tanzania. This project aims to directly contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals of Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure; Sustainable Cities and Communities; Responsible Consumption and Production; Climate Action; and Partnerships for the Goals (SDG 17). The project aims to create sustainable living spaces in Sub-Saharan Africa using long-lasting and affordable building materials.



**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **Sakarya University's "Language Tree" Project Strengthens Its Research University Vision**

Sakarya University, aiming to establish sustainable partnerships within global education networks, is making a name for itself in the international arena with an innovative project in language teaching. The "*Language Tree*" Project, part of the Erasmus+ KA220-YOU Program supported by the European Union and the Turkish National Agency, stands out as one of the most comprehensive and prestigious initiatives in the field of social sciences. The project, developed in collaboration with Sakarya University and TÖMER, has introduced a new international collaboration model in language teaching through the "Certificate Program for Teaching Turkish to Bilinguals and Foreigners."

The program, which began with an opening speech by Gamze Bozgöz, Education Attaché at the Consulate General of the Republic of Turkey in Düsseldorf, was designed for young educators and university students interested in specializing in language teaching. Academics and trainers from 17 different universities and civil society organizations in Turkey and Europe provided training on bilingualism, innovative pedagogies in language teaching, and digital learning tools. The program, attended by over 50 young language instructors from universities in Turkey and Europe, aimed to develop the participants' pedagogical and digital competencies.

Workshops conducted as part of the project focused on probabilistic conversation chain design and algorithm-based learning models, demonstrating how AI-powered digital tools can be used in language teaching. The developed web-based application was designed to support the sustainability of digital education by providing instructors with an interactive and dynamic learning environment.

The event was held in Duisburg, Germany. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Muhammed Hüküm led the project on behalf of Sakarya University. Project team members Assoc. Prof. Dr. Yakup Alan, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Altun, Lecturer Ömer Göktaş, and Lecturer Saliha Taze provided theoretical and practical training to the participants. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Muhammed Hüküm thanked all the academics who contributed to the project and stated that Sakarya University will continue to contribute to the

Sustainable Development Goals through international education and research partnerships. Hüküm emphasized that the Language Tree Project is not merely an educational initiative but also an exemplary model that fosters interdisciplinary collaboration, digital capacity development, and cultural interaction.

In this respect, the Language Tree Project embodies Sakarya University's vision of internationalization, digital transformation, and sustainable academic development, making a substantial contribution to Turkey's global visibility in higher education and multi-stakeholder scientific diplomacy efforts.



**For more information, click here;**

#### **Sakarya University's Sustainable Development Initiative Extending to Africa**

Sakarya University has taken another significant step toward becoming a research university by increasing its international visibility in scientific production. By executing a European Union (EU) project with a budget of €780,000, the university is taking a leading role in strengthening international partnerships to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The project, which involves the participation of five different countries, aims to promote the use of environmentally friendly construction materials sourced from local areas and strengthen collaboration among higher education institutions, professionals, and local communities in Sub-Saharan Africa. This project aims to reduce construction costs and develop resilient infrastructure for sustainable cities.

The project is directly aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure (SDG 9), Responsible Consumption and Production (SDG 12), Climate Action (SDG 13), Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11), and, in particular, Partnerships for the Goals (SDG 17).

Supported by leading universities from Portugal, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Somalia, the project is coordinated by Dr. Tuba Tatar, a faculty member at Sakarya University's Faculty of Engineering. The project team includes Prof. Dr. Mehmet Emiroğlu and Dr. Samir Afifi as researchers. The 36-month project aims to establish sustainable building technologies and educational infrastructure on the African continent.

This initiative further demonstrates Sakarya University's status as an active actor in science, technology, and sustainable development, not only nationally but also globally. Through this project, the university strengthens its international research networks, contributing to Turkey's visibility within the European Union Research Area and supporting the development of sustainable living conditions in Africa with academic and ethical responsibility.



**For more information, click here;**

### **Sakarya University Students Participated in the “Solution Challenge” Competition with Three Projects**

Sakarya University students continue to contribute to the university's internationalization vision and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the innovative projects they develop. One of our university's student clubs, the Google Developer Student Clubs, participated in the global "Solution Challenge" competition, themed around the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals, with three projects: "SociaFit," "Detection of Fake and Real News," and "EcoPoint." These projects demonstrate the ability of Sakarya University students to develop technology-based solutions to global problems and contribute to strengthening international collaborations in line with SDG 17 - Partnerships for the Goals.

#### **1. SociaFit: A Digital Solution for a Healthy and Social Life**

Developed in line with SDG 3, "Healthy and Quality Life," the SociaFit mobile app provides solutions to the challenges of modern life, including inactivity, social isolation, and digital addiction. The project aims to both strengthen social interactions and support social well-being by increasing individuals' physical activity. Project Team: Ahmet Boztemur, Hasan Özgür Doğan, Furkan Uzun, Oğuzhan Yavaş

#### **2. Detection of Fake and Real News: Digital Transparency Against Information Disruption**

This project, which aligns with the goals of SDG 12, "Responsible Consumption and Production," and SDG 16, "Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions," develops an AI-powered system to prevent the spread of fake news. The project aims to raise public awareness by supporting the principles of transparency and accuracy in the information ecosystem. Project Team: Yunus Eren Arslan, Ömer Üçüncü, İremnur Pulat, Tarık Toplu

#### **3. EcoPoint: Responsibility and Innovation in Waste Management**

Linked to SDG 12 "Responsible Production and Consumption," SDG 6 "Clean Water and Sanitation," SDG 13 "Climate Action," SDG 14 "Life Below Water," and SDG 15 "Life on Land," the EcoPoint project aims to ensure proper waste collection and digitally manage recycling processes. Through the mobile app, users raise environmental awareness through waste collection activities while contributing to a culture of sustainable living.

These three projects demonstrate that Sakarya University students are not only engaged in technology development but also active participants in global sustainability networks. By supporting the visibility of young entrepreneurs on such platforms, the university continues to make concrete contributions to international cooperation, innovation, and youth engagement.



**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **The University's First Jean Monnet Module Project Accepted**

Sakarya University has achieved another significant success in line with the European Union's education and sustainability policies. Professor Dr. Mustafa Bayrakçı, a faculty member in the Department of Educational Sciences, has been awarded a grant for his Jean Monnet Module project titled *"The Role of Sustainable Schools as Key Change Agents in Achieving European Sustainability Goals – SUSTAINEDU."* This achievement marks the first project to receive Jean Monnet Module support from Sakarya University.

The three-year SUSTAINEDU Project aims to reposition educational institutions as key actors in environmental, social, and economic sustainability, in line with the European Union's Green Deal and Sustainable Development Strategy. The project aims to strengthen sustainability awareness, ecological awareness, and a culture of social responsibility among students, teachers, administrators, and policymakers by developing sustainable schools. The project aims to establish a robust collaborative network among civil society, the public sector, and academia, promoting a multi-stakeholder governance approach.

To this end, seminars, workshops, field visits, summer schools, and a project closing summit will be organized throughout the duration of the project. These activities will contribute to the development of sustainability-based school models, enhance teachers' digital and eco-pedagogical competencies, and increase the visibility of sustainable school policies across Europe.

The SUSTAINEDU Project stands out as a concrete demonstration of Sakarya University's vision to strengthen international sustainability-based collaborations. Through this project, the university continues to pioneer the development of a culture of sustainable education, climate action, and partnerships both at the European Union and national levels.



**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **CinEd European Union Project Meeting Held at Sakarya University**

Sakarya University hosted an international event that strengthened European cultural cooperation and supported young people's creative expression. The first meeting of the 2024 CinEd EU Project, implemented as part of the Creative Europe Media Programme, aimed at strengthening European cinema against Hollywood and encouraging young people to discover it, was hosted by Sakarya University from March 5 to 8.

As part of the project, in which the Department of Radio, Television and Cinema of our university's Faculty of Communication is a partner, representatives from Germany, Portugal, Italy, France, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Finland, and other European countries gathered in Sakarya. The CinEd project, which has been running since 2015, stands out as one of the longest-running cultural cooperation projects in the European Union under the Creative Europe Media Program.

At this year's meeting, representatives from the Portuguese Cinema Association Os Filhos de Lumi re, the French Ministry of Education, and the Portuguese Cinema Museum organized training sessions as part of a workshop titled "Training of Trainers: The CinEd Method in Film Reading." Academics, teachers, and researchers from Turkey and Europe participated, conducting practical sessions on how European cinema can be used as a pedagogical tool in education systems. Project evaluation meetings were held on the second day of the program at the Sakarya University Turgut  zal Culture and Congress Center. Participants watched Ahmet Ulu ay's "Building Ships from Watermelon Rind" and Faysal Soysal's "Three Ways" to evaluate the unique narrative power of Turkish cinema. The aspects of Turkish cinema that reflect cultural diversity, artistic creativity, and human values were met with interest by European cinema representatives.

This multinational gathering created a platform that strengthened cultural solidarity, knowledge sharing, and cultural dialogue between Europe and Turkey. Sakarya University continues to contribute to European Union cultural policies at the academic level by supporting the principles of cultural sustainability, inclusive education, and cultural diversity through its participation in international events.





**For more information, [click here](#);**

### **The 2nd International Symposium on Teaching Turkish as a Heritage and Foreign Language Successfully Concluded**

Sakarya University contributed to a significant international event promoting cultural diversity and linguistic sustainability as part of the Language Tree Project, supported by the European Commission. The 2nd International Symposium on Teaching Turkish as a Heritage Language and a Foreign Language (ISOHTEL), hosted by the YADOT Education Association and organized in collaboration with Istanbul Bilgi University, was successfully held from March 5 to 8, 2024.

This large-scale event brought together Minister of National Education Yusuf Tekin, Board of Education and Training President Prof. Dr. Cihad Demirli, and Turkish Language Association Vice President Assoc. Prof. Dr. Harun Şahin, Turkish Beyazay Association President Lokman Ayva, Istanbul Bilgi University Rector M. Ege Yazgan, and numerous academics, educators, and civil society representatives.

The symposium also shared scientific outcomes from the Language Tree Project's work packages with the participants. At the symposium, 39 papers from Turkey and abroad were presented over 12 sessions, discussing innovative methods for teaching Turkish. The program concluded with a joint evaluation session by the organizing committee and project representatives.

This event demonstrates that Sakarya University is taking a leading role in cultural sustainability, educational inclusiveness, and digital innovation by strengthening international academic collaborations. The Language Tree Project contributes to the international promotion of Turkish as a cultural bridge across borders and the development of sustainable language policies.





**For more information, click here;**

### **Sakarya University Faculty of Education Hosted an International Education Meeting in Ireland**

Sakarya University, a pioneer in efforts to strengthen international solidarity in education, continues to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals through projects carried out in collaboration with its strategic partners in Europe. As part of project number 2021-2-TR01-KA210-ADU-000050028, supported by the National Agency of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a multi-stakeholder educational event was held in Donegal, Ireland, under the coordination of the Faculty of Education.

At the event, education experts from European countries, including Romania, Finland, Ireland, and Italy, convened to engage in strategic discussions on the sustainability of educational services in emergencies such as avalanches, earthquakes, floods, and epidemics. Innovative approaches to ensure continuity of education during crises were developed and documented during these meetings, supported by workshops, seminars, and conferences. As a result of these efforts, a book titled "Learning in Difficult Times (LEAD)" and scenario applications will be prepared and presented to the national agencies of the partner countries. These contents will be made available to a wide range of stakeholders to increase resilience in education and ensure sustainable learning opportunities during emergencies. Prof. Dr. R  st   Ye  il and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mehmet Emin Usta from Sakarya University represented Turkey at the event. The meeting also included decisions on new collaborations aimed at improving teacher quality across Europe, as part of the European Commission's "Teacher Academies" initiative. Accordingly, Sakarya University plans to take leadership alongside European stakeholders in teacher education, curriculum development, digital pedagogies, and in-service training by 2025.

This initiative supports Sakarya University's objectives of enhancing international knowledge sharing, promoting inclusivity in education, and fostering resilient learning ecosystems. Through such partnerships, the University remains an active partner in the sustainable transformation of European education.



**For more information, click here;**

## **Collaboration with NGO's**

Sakarya University considers civil society organizations to be essential stakeholders in achieving its sustainable development goals. The university collaborates with numerous local, national, and international NGOs in the areas of education, environment, health, social equality, and volunteerism. Joint projects, seminars, awareness campaigns, and training programs implemented within this framework not only raise public awareness but also strengthen students' understanding of sustainability. Through these collaborations, the university aims to develop solutions to social problems, promote social inclusion, and encourage joint action towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This approach demonstrates that Sakarya University concretely implements the concept of "partnership for common goals" (SDG 17).

### **Strong Cooperation between Sakarya University and Yeşilay**

Sakarya University organized a significant event to raise awareness about cybersecurity, one of the most critical areas of the digital age, and to develop students' industry competencies. The "Introduction to Cybersecurity" event, hosted by the Faculty of Computer and Information Sciences, brought together students, academics, and industry representatives, fostering a culture of knowledge sharing and collaborative learning.

The Sakarya University Cybersecurity Student Community organized the event. Participants included numerous students from computer science, software engineering, and cybersecurity engineering departments. The event aimed to raise students' awareness of current types of cyber threats, system vulnerabilities, and security measures, as well as their understanding of digital security.

The program covered the technical aspects of cyberattack methods and defense strategies, while also sharing comprehensive information on corporate cyber resilience and individual digital security habits. One of the most striking aspects of the event was the participation of students actively engaged in internships in the sector as speakers. These students shared their experiences and provided professional and ethical guidance to their peers.

The event also addressed employment opportunities, career planning, and industry skill requirements in the field of cybersecurity. Participants were informed about the certification processes, internship programs, and national/international collaborations necessary for development in this dynamic field.

This event served as an example of strengthening university-student-industry collaboration and fostering the sharing of knowledge and experience. With such activities, Sakarya University aims not only to transfer technical knowledge but also to create a sustainable ecosystem of digital security awareness.





**For more information, [click here](#);**

### **Strengthening Awareness through the Workshop on Violence Prevention Strategies at Sakarya University**

Sakarya University has signed another important partnership in line with its social awareness and sustainable development goals. The "Violence Prevention Strategies Workshop," organized in collaboration with the Sakarya University Social Contribution and Sustainability Coordination Office (TOKAS), the Women's Research Center, Sakarya *TEKNOKENT*, and the Sakarya Provincial Directorate of Family and Social Services, served as an exemplary initiative in line with the shared social transformation goals of the university and public institutions.

The workshop, organized as part of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on November 25th, was held at the *TEKNOKENT* Fusion Incubation Center. The event addressed the conceptual dimension of combating violence, types of violence, gender equality, awareness-raising methods, and support mechanisms for victims of violence. Participants were provided with detailed information about the legal rights provided under Law No. 6284 on the Protection of the Family and the Prevention of Violence against Women, as well as the functions of the Violence Prevention and Monitoring Center (ŞÖNİM) and women's shelters.

In the interactive portion of the event, participants discussed various violence scenarios using case studies and developed solution proposals, accompanied by expert moderators. This hands-on workshop aimed to raise awareness of social responsibility in combating violence among a diverse range of participants, including students and academic staff.

This strategic partnership between Sakarya University and the Sakarya Provincial Directorate of Family and Social Services fosters inter-institutional collaboration, knowledge sharing, and social impact, aligning with United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). The event also directly links to SDG 5 (Gender Equality), offering a multi-stakeholder and sustainable awareness model for preventing violence against women.

Sakarya University aims to expand its academic, educational, and social activities within the scope of combating violence and to strengthen new collaborations that support gender equality in line with the principles of sustainability and inclusiveness.





**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **Strategic Cooperation Protocol Signed between Sakarya University and TÜYAFED**

Sakarya University has signed a new partnership that will contribute to strengthening national capacity in technology and innovation. The cooperation protocol signed between the Turkish Software Developers Federation (TÜYAFED) and Sakarya University aims to establish a comprehensive academia-industry-NGO collaboration model in line with the goals of digital transformation, software development, and sustainable development.

The protocol, signed by Sakarya University Rector Prof. Dr. Hamza Al and TÜYAFED President Mustafa Çalış, aims to bring together stakeholders from the public, industry, civil society, and academia on a single platform, creating a sustainable impact in the areas of knowledge generation, technology transfer, and human resources development.

In this context, the parties will organize innovative activities, including joint scientific publications, national and international R&D projects, workshops, seminars, panels, code banks/code stocks, and an artificial intelligence league. These activities will enhance students' digital competencies and contribute to the development of future technology professionals.

The protocol supports knowledge sharing, capacity building, and strengthening the innovation ecosystem through collaboration among universities, NGOs, and industry. With this collaboration, Sakarya University has taken a pioneering step that shapes not only the software ecosystem but also Türkiye's digital sustainability vision.



**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **Green Transformation Awareness: "Nature-Friendly Truck" at Sakarya University**

Sakarya University is hosting the "Green Campus Festival" to strengthen awareness of sustainable living and promote environmentally friendly practices. Organized in collaboration with the Turkish Environment Agency and the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change, the event encourages public institutions, academia, and young people to take joint action on environmental awareness.



As part of the festival, a Nature-Friendly Truck will be positioned at the Sakarya University Helipad to welcome visitors. During the events, which will take place from December 11 to 13, students and environmental volunteers will engage in a variety of interactive activities, including recycling workshops, sustainable culinary practices, holobox and VR experiences, environmentally themed competitions, and film and documentary screenings.

The Green Campus Festival aims to raise young people's awareness of environmental sustainability and contribute to the transformation of environmentally friendly behaviors into social culture. Through this event, Sakarya University promotes not only environmental protection awareness but also social cooperation, innovative environmental technologies, and sustainable campus living principles.



**For more information, [click here](#);**

### **“Smoke-Free Campus” Implementation for a Healthy Life at Esentepe Campus**

Sakarya University has taken a significant step toward achieving its goals of sustainable living and a healthy society by launching the "Smoke-Free Campus" initiative. This project, implemented in collaboration with the Addiction Fighting and Implementation Center, the Social Contribution and Sustainability Coordination Office (TOKAS), and the Sakarya Branch of the Green Crescent, offers a strong example of collaboration between the university, the public, and civil society within the framework of the.

The first step of the initiative was taken with the designation of Sakarya University's Esentepe Campus as a "smoke-free campus" zone at an event held in conjunction with World Tobacco-Free Day on May 31st. Planned to be implemented on all campuses by the 2024–2025 academic year, the initiative aims to protect the right to clean air, reduce tobacco addiction, and prevent environmental pollution. The Smoke-Free Campus initiative, spearheaded by Sakarya University, contributes to creating healthy, safe, and environmentally friendly university environments. With this initiative, the university invites students, staff, and all stakeholders to take collective action for a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable life.



**For more information, click here;**

### **“Kindness and Volunteering Movement” Seminar Held at Sakarya University**

Sakarya University hosted a seminar program titled "The Kindness and Volunteer Movement" to promote social solidarity and volunteerism. The event, held at the Turgut Özal Culture and Congress Center, was organized by the In-Service Training Branch of the Human Resources Department. SAU Vice Rector Prof. Dr. Özer Köseoğlu and numerous administrative staff attended the program.

Speaking at the seminar, Prof. Dr. Köseoğlu emphasized the need for stronger institutional promotion of volunteerism, saying, "We want to address the issue of volunteerism under the umbrella of a coordinatorship, because touching the lives of others is not only an individual virtue but also the foundation of social development."

Following the event, Lecturer Abdullah Şenaslan addressed the contribution of volunteerism to society, the importance of empathy in communication, and the impact of volunteer activities on individual development. Şenaslan stated that volunteering has become a significant indicator of academic and professional development in many countries, saying, "Our goal is to promote kindness, solidarity, and volunteering; generations are changing, and we too must transform with kindness." He also shared that they plan to create an online platform to facilitate digital volunteer work.

This event fosters the development of a culture of inter-institutional solidarity, social engagement, and mutual goodwill.



**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **Strengthening Environmental Awareness through the Zero Waste Peer Education Program at Sakarya University**

Sakarya University (SAU) has launched the "Zero Waste Peer Education Program" to raise environmental sustainability awareness among young people and achieve its goal of zero waste. This program, implemented for the first time across the university, aims to encourage students to raise environmental awareness and adopt a zero-waste approach by educating one another.

As part of the program, students in the SAU-555 Sustainability and SAU-501 Youth and Volunteering courses, trained by the University Climate Ambassador on March 30th, International Zero Waste Day, conducted "Zero Waste"-themed peer education sessions at the Esentepe Campus from March 27th to 29th. Students in the EBB-021 Sustainable Development and Education course continued their educational activities at the Hendek Campus.

This innovative program, thanks to its student-to-student learning model, ensures the permanent transfer of knowledge and strengthens the university's efforts to achieve sustainable transformation, as part of its zero-waste project. With this program, Sakarya University aims to both improve waste management habits across the campus and foster long-term environmental awareness among students.

With the "Zero Waste Peer Education Program," Sakarya University continues to strengthen the culture of collective action for a sustainable future, extending from the local to the global, with this project carried out with the vision of raising environmentally conscious generations.



**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **Environmental Awareness Message during Environment Week: “We All Have One World” Event Held at Sakarya University**

Sakarya University (SAU) organized a meaningful educational program as part of Turkey's Environment Week activities to raise environmental awareness and convey a sense of sustainable living to younger generations. The program, organized by the Community Contribution and Sustainability Coordination Office (TOKAS), offered education to students at SAU Foundation Private Schools under the theme "We All Have One World!"

At the training, TOKAS Deputy Coordinator, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aliye Suna Erses Yay gave a comprehensive presentation on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At the same time, Associate Prof. Dr. Ümmügölsüm Zor, a faculty member at the Faculty of Business Administration, shared examples of sustainable economics and ecological living with the students. As part of the event, students participated in nature-insect-inspired activities in the campus's green spaces, establishing a bee and insect hotel, a birdhouse, and feeding stations. Additionally, spring water storage systems were introduced in landscaped areas to raise awareness about water conservation. This event was held as part of Turkey's Environment Week, which took place from June 5 to 9. With the United Nations declaring June 5 as World Environment Day, environmental awareness campaigns are being conducted nationwide under the theme "We All Have One World." The program addresses topics such as climate change, desertification, drought, and zero waste management, aiming to raise public awareness of environmental responsibility and foster a culture of collective action to protect natural resources.



**For more information, click here;**

#### **A First in Türkiye: "Women in Business" Micro-Credential Program by Sakarya University**

Sakarya University (SAU) has taken an innovative step to strengthen women's presence in business, support their career development, and promote gender equality in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. The "Women in Business Micro-Qualifications Program," implemented as part of the "Future-Shaping Women Academy," developed under the leadership of the Social Contribution and Sustainability Coordination Office (TOKAS), was organized in collaboration with Sakarya *TEKNOKENT* and the Sakarya Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SATSO). The program was launched at Sakarya University on May 3, 2024.

The program aims to empower women students in areas such as career planning, leadership, crisis management, sustainable development, digital competencies, social entrepreneurship, and project management. Participants will gain both theoretical knowledge and practical experience by interacting with industry representatives and academics. Participants who complete the training will receive a digital badge and certificate equivalent to 5 ECTS credits. These badges can also be considered standard elective courses at Sakarya University.

The "Women in Business Micro-Qualifications Program" supports the empowerment of women in the business world and serves as a concrete example of Sustainable Development Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) by deepening collaboration between universities, industry, and civil society organizations.



### Education for The SDGs

Sakarya University has established a sustainability-focused institutional culture by integrating the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into its higher education policies, academic programs, and social contribution activities. With a vision centered on quality education, the university aims to cultivate students not only with academic knowledge but also with a sense of social, environmental, and ethical responsibility.

To this end, Sakarya University has integrated sustainable development principles into the course content, research projects, and learning outcomes system of all its faculties and programs. Courses in engineering, social sciences, health sciences, and education, in particular, address topics such as climate change, environmental sustainability, social equality, ethical management, and resource efficiency from an interdisciplinary perspective. Furthermore, through applied educational models such as the "Youth and Volunteering Course," students gain direct experience in sustainable development by developing social responsibility projects on a local and global scale.

Through the Sakarya University Continuing Education Application and Research Center (SAÜSEM), the university organizes lifelong learning programs for all segments of society. Through social, cultural, and vocational certification training, it supports individuals in acquiring the knowledge and skills to contribute to sustainable development. The training programs offered within this framework provide an accessible and inclusive learning environment for students, graduates, public institutions, private sector employees, and disadvantaged groups.

Sakarya University also conducts regular student-focused assessments to measure and develop sustainability awareness, using the resulting data in curriculum updates and strategic planning. Awareness events, panels, workshops, and practical projects, coordinated by the Office of Community Contribution and Sustainability (TOKAS), strengthen students' sustainability literacy.

This holistic approach demonstrates that Sakarya University implements sustainable development principles not only theoretically but also concretely in its education, research, and social contribution processes. Thus, the university pursues its vision of being a higher education institution that shapes the sustainable future of Turkey and the world by cultivating conscious, sensitive, and responsible individuals who contribute to sustainability at local, national, and global levels.

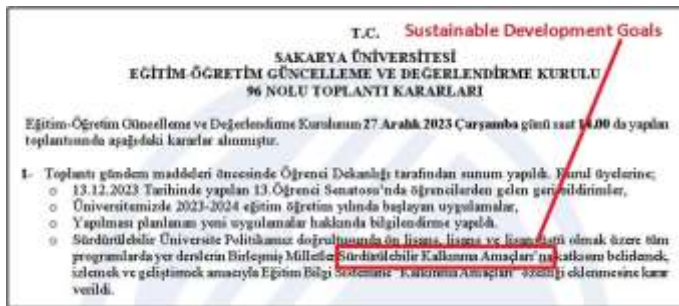


## Commitment to Education

Sakarya University is committed to offering meaningful and effective educational programs in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The university develops and implements curricula aimed at equipping students with comprehensive knowledge and skills in sustainable development. This commitment extends beyond theoretical knowledge to include practical experiences. Sakarya University encourages students to take an active role in sustainability through various projects, internship programs, and field studies. Additionally, seminars, conferences, and workshops organized by the university enable students and academics to acquire up-to-date information on sustainable development and apply this knowledge. These efforts reinforce Sakarya University's commitment and leadership in achieving sustainable development goals.

The course in the Sabis Education Information System is associated with sustainable development goals.

In line with the Sustainable University Policy, it has been decided to add the 'Development Goals' feature to the Education Information System in order to determine, monitor, and improve the contribution of courses to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in all programs, including associate, undergraduate, and graduate levels.



## Full Degrees, or Electives Courses

Sakarya University aims to raise awareness and competence in sustainability among its students and academic community by offering various specialized programs in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The university provides special courses, certificate programs, and research projects focused on the SDGs, enabling students to gain in-depth knowledge on sustainable development. These programs cover fundamental sustainability principles such as environmental

protection, social equity, and economic development, and equip students with practical skills in these areas.

#### Examples of Full-Degree and Elective Courses

Code	Type	Course Title	Credit	Ects
CVM 337	Full	Environmental Health Management	3	3
CVM 302	Full	Water Treatment	3	4
CVM 308	Full	Treatment of Wastewater	3	3
CVM 443	Electives	Practical Applications of Water and Wastewater Treatment in Environmental Engineering (Industry Course)	3	4
BIY 215	Electives	Environmental Problems and Solutions	2	5
SAU 013	Electives	Environment and Energy	2	5
SAU 044	Electives	Ecology, Science and Sustainability	1	2
MIM 008	Electives	Global Climate Change	2	5
CVM 450	Electives	Disinfection By-Products in Drinking Water and Their Control	3	4
CVM 429	Electives	Advanced Treatment Systems	3	4
MKM 435	Electives	Power Plants	3	5
ULI 438	Electives	Global Environmental Policies and Sustainable Development	3	5

BIY 319	Electives	Limnology	2	4
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#### Examples of Elective Courses for Master's Programs

Code	Type	Course Title	Credit	Ects
SAU 555	Electives	Sustainability	2	5
EEM 470	Electives	Renewable and Sustainable Energy	3	5
ELK 503	Electives	Energy Efficiency in Lighting	3	6
CEM 527	Electives	Sustainable and Integrated Water Resources Management under Climate Change	3	6
ISG 513	Electives	Industrial Pollution and Control	3	6
CEM 551	Electives	Surface Water Quality Modeling	3	6

#### Examples of Elective Courses for Doctoral Programs

Code	Type	Course Title	Credit	Ects
CEM 612	Electives	Risk Assessments in Water Management and Climate Change	3	6
CEK 617	Electives	Green Economy and Sustainable Social Policy	3	6
CEM 617	Electives	Water Efficiency in Industry and Water Footprint	3	6

CEM 607	Electives	Advanced Oxidation Systems for Water and Wastewater Treatment	3	6
CEM 604	Electives	Use of Sewage Sludge in Agriculture	3	6
CEM 612	Electives	Risk Assessments and Climate Change In Water Management	3	6

### **Educational Activities**

Sakarya University offers courses accessible to the community and individuals outside the university through its continuous education center.

Through its lifelong learning services, Sakarya University provides access to educational resources for those not enrolled at the university by offering various educational programs, organizing public events, and sharing the university's knowledge resources with the public. The trainings conducted by the Sakarya University Continuous Education Center (SAÜSEM) include professional training, technical training, and certification programs, as well as short courses for individuals who do not attend the university.

The Sakarya University Continuous Education Center (SAUSEM) conducts over a hundred training and certification programs aimed at entrepreneurs and individuals seeking to develop or acquire new skills.

### **Social and Cultural Courses**

Sakarya University supports lifelong learning and contributes to local development by providing accessible, inclusive, and sustainable educational opportunities for all segments of society. The Sakarya University Continuing Education Application and Research Center (SAÜSEM), operating within this framework, offers a wide range of certification programs to strengthen individuals' professional development, social inclusion, and employability.

The training programs featured in the image include Family and Religious Guidance Office Consultancy, Bank Personnel Basic Training, Deep Learning and Computer Vision, DHBT Preparatory Training, Job and Vocational Counseling (Level 6), Basic Sign Language Training, Anti-Mobbing Unit Officer, NLP Master Practitioner, Chess Training, and Basic Breathing Training, all of which develop both social and technical skills.

Through these activities, the university contributes to achieving the goals of quality education (SDG 4), decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), and reducing inequalities (SDG 10). These comprehensive programs, carried out by SAÜSEM, are a concrete reflection of Sakarya University's vision to provide inclusive, applicable, and sustainable learning opportunities for different segments of society.



For more information, [click here](#);

### Vocational Courses

Sakarya University conducts lifelong learning and inclusive education activities not only for its students but also for all segments of society. Operating within this framework, the Sakarya University Continuing Education Application and Research Center (SAÜSEM) reaches a broad audience, including alumni, residents, employees, and disadvantaged groups.

The center's social, cultural, technical, and vocational certification programs aim to enhance participants' individual development, professional skills, and social awareness. Programs include training for a variety of ages and professions, such as Digital Content Creation, Database Querying with Python and SQL, Occupational Health and Safety, Hygiene Training, Fire Safety, Time and Stress Management, 3D Mechanical Design with SolidWorks, and Natural Gas Firefighting.

These activities offer reskilling and employability opportunities for alums, local communities, employees, and job seekers. Thus, Sakarya University presents an exemplary university-community collaboration model that strengthens social inclusion, aligning with the goals of quality education (SDG 4), decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), and reducing inequalities (SDG 10).





**For more information, click here;**

The **Career Development Coordination** Office engages with students and maintains communication and collaboration with alumni after graduation to accompany and support them throughout their career journeys by carrying out the necessary activities.

In this context, to help students and alumni make informed decisions about their careers:

- Being aware of their personal characteristics, professional tendencies, interests, and desires,
- Developing their knowledge, skills, and competencies,
- Defining and achieving their career goals,
- Being informed about job and internship opportunities,
- Progressing by adapting to the changing conditions of the business world

It aims to support them in areas where they need assistance, such as:



**For more information, click here;**

The **Alumni Relations Coordination Office** aims to establish a strong bond with its alumni, who are part of the university's rich heritage. It works to support its graduates in their post-graduation lives, enrich their experiences, and bring them together to form a strong alumni community.

- **Strengthening Connections:** Aiming to build strong bonds with alumni through communication, events, and projects.
- **Career Support:** Providing guidance on career matters and offering job and internship opportunities to alumni.
- **Events and Gatherings:** Organizing various events, seminars, and social gatherings to bring alumni together.
- **Donations and Contributions:** Offering various donation and support opportunities for alumni who wish to contribute to the development of our university.



For more information, click [here](#);

### **The Youth and Volunteering Course is being launched at Sakarya University.**

Based on a comprehensive cooperation protocol between the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Council of Higher Education, aimed at promoting youth activities and developing volunteer activities, the 'Youth and Volunteering' course with the course code SAU 501 has been introduced as a university-wide elective course at our university starting from the 2023-2024 academic year. The course aims to strengthen the ties between the university and the community by enabling students to use the knowledge, skills, and experiences they have gained throughout their education. Students will participate in various volunteer activities to gain awareness of various issues and problems in society, such as migration and disasters, disabilities, and disadvantaged groups, among others.



For more information, click [here](#);

### **“Kindness and Volunteering Movement” Seminar Held at Sakarya University**

Sakarya University (SAU) organizes awareness-raising events with broad participation to promote a culture of volunteerism and strengthen social solidarity. In this context, a seminar titled "The Kindness and Volunteer Movement" was held at the SAU Turgut Özal Culture and Congress Center.

The event was organized by the In-Service Training Branch of the SAU Human Resources Department and was attended by university staff, academics, and administrators. Participants received practical information on topics such as empathy, effective communication, project management, creating solutions to social problems, case studies, and environmental awareness. Plans for expanding volunteer activities through digital platforms were also shared.

This event reflects Sakarya University's vision of fostering a culture of social responsibility, solidarity, and volunteerism, in line with the goals of quality education (SDG 4), peace, justice, and strong institutions (SDG 16), and partnerships for the purpose of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 17).



**For more information, [click here](#);**

#### **Awareness Event on “Perception of Disability and Normalization” Held at Sakarya University**

Sakarya University organized an awareness event titled "Disability Perception and Normalization" to strengthen public awareness of inclusion and raise awareness about disability. Psychologist and Special Education Specialist Ayşenur Bahçivancıoğlu Yazıcı was a speaker at the event.

The event addressed themes such as social perceptions of individuals with disabilities, language use, the concept of normalization, and a rights-based approach to disability. Yazıcı emphasized that negative expressions used from childhood onward shape the perception of disability and lead to the marginalization of individuals. Furthermore, the decisive role of legal regulations and public awareness in promoting disability rights was emphasized.

The event explored the historical development and cultural impact of the concept of "normalization," emphasizing that evaluating individuals based on their physical or mental differences perpetuates social exclusion. Instead, it was emphasized that a rights-based approach should be adopted, where differences are accepted as a natural part of society.

This event is directly related to the goals of quality education (SDG 4), reducing inequalities (SDG 10), and peace, justice, and strong institutions (SDG 16). Through such activities, Sakarya University develops a sustainable social consciousness that promotes inclusive language use, awareness-based education, and accessible living spaces for all.



**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **Sakarya University Youth Makes a Difference through Community Engagement Activities**

Sakarya University (SAU) has incorporated the "Youth and Volunteering Course" into its curriculum to develop students' awareness of social responsibility and promote a culture of volunteerism. This course is a practical educational model that supports students in developing projects that contribute to society at both local and global levels.

In this context, the "Youth and Volunteering Course End-of-Term Activities" event was organized by the SAU Youth and Volunteering Course Coordinator, Instructor Abdullah Şenaslan. The event was held at the Turgut Özal Culture and Congress Center with the participation of a large number of students, academics, and administrative staff.

At the event, students shared information about the outcomes of 23 volunteering projects they carried out throughout the semester. These projects included an aid bazaar for Palestine, a donation campaign for orphans in Afghanistan, a wall-painting event for individuals with disabilities, visits to nursing homes, children's rights awareness campaigns, and environmental clean-up campaigns.

Speeches at the event emphasized the contribution of volunteering to individual development, social solidarity, and global citizenship awareness. Students' experiences demonstrated that volunteering offers a significant learning opportunity for both psychological healing and social transformation.

Sakarya University strengthens a culture of sustainable development and a sense of social responsibility across diverse segments of society.





**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **A Step of Global Solidarity from Sakarya University: Bringing Hope to Children in Palestine, Cameroon, and Bangladesh**

Sakarya University (SAU) encourages students to participate in social responsibility projects at both local and international levels through the "Youth and Volunteering Course," which has been incorporated into its curriculum to strengthen its volunteer-based learning approach. In this context, students, led by the course coordinator, Instructor Abdullah Şenaslan, have recently created a significant social impact on a global scale through their volunteering activities. Students have supported regional development by digging water wells in rural areas of India and providing nutrition, clothing, and education support through aid programs for orphans in Palestine (Gaza and Rafah Border Camp), Cameroon, and Bangladesh.



**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **Sakarya University Received the Accessible Informatics Education Award**

Sakarya University (SAU) supports the full and equal participation of individuals with disabilities in education through innovative practices implemented in line with the principles of equal opportunity and accessibility in education. In this context, the "Accessible Continuing Education Project," developed in collaboration with the Sakarya University Continuing Education Application and Research Center (SAÜSEM) and the Barrier-Free Life and Support Coordination Office, stands out as an exemplary application that strengthens inclusivity in digital learning environments.

As part of the project, the SAÜSEM website and application screens were adapted to meet accessibility standards. Keyboard shortcuts were added for visually impaired trainees, course materials were supplemented with alternative text, and course videos were captioned for individuals with hearing impairments. Furthermore, the exam systems were fully compatible with screen readers, enabling individuals with disabilities to participate in online exams without assistance.



As a result of these efforts, Sakarya University was awarded the "Barrier-Free Informatics Education Award" in an evaluation process conducted by the Turkish Barrier-Free Informatics Platform. This award confirms the university's pioneering role in accessible digital learning and inclusive education.

Sakarya University's vision of accessible education ensures the development of a learning ecosystem that is accessible, fair and sustainable for all..



**For more information, click [here](#);**

### **Sustainability Literacy**

Sakarya University has established an institutional policy to monitor students' knowledge, awareness, and behavior regarding sustainability issues. The university regularly assesses students' sustainability literacy through courses, social contribution projects, and measurement and evaluation practices aligned with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. These assessments cover key indicators, including environmental awareness, social responsibility, ethical awareness, and the efficient use of resources. The data obtained is used to develop educational programs and update the university's sustainability strategies. Thus, Sakarya University views sustainability literacy not only as an educational outcome but also as a crucial component of institutional performance.

### **Panel on “Understanding and Practicing Sustainability” Held at Sakarya University**

Sakarya University (SAU) regularly conducts awareness events, panels, and assessment-focused activities to increase and measure its students' sustainability literacy. In this context, the "Understanding & Implementing Sustainability" Panel, organized in collaboration with the SAU Zero Waste Coordination Office, the Accounting, Auditing, and Finance Student Community (MUDEF), and the Office of Social Contribution and Sustainability (TOKAS), serves as an exemplary initiative aimed at assessing students' knowledge, awareness, and attitudes toward sustainable development.

During the panel, representatives from organizations such as Toyota, Vakıfbank, LC Waikiki, the Public Oversight Agency, and Good4Trust shared their sustainability strategies, enhancing students' knowledge of sustainable business models. During the event, students' perceptions and awareness of the environmental, social, and economic dimensions of sustainability were observed, and feedback was obtained regarding participants' knowledge and attitudes.

The panel was evaluated as an event that strengthened students' sustainability awareness and produced measurable learning outcomes. Sakarya University continuously monitors and improves the sustainability literacy of its students through such activities.



**For more information, click here;**

#### **A Water Efficiency Success Story from the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture Students**

Sakarya University conducts applied awareness projects within the scope of its "Youth and Volunteering Course" to increase and measure students' sustainability awareness. This course provides a measurable educational model designed to assess and enhance students' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to environmental sustainability, social responsibility, and resource efficiency.

The "Water Efficiency and Environmental Awareness Project," implemented as part of the course, aimed to assess students' awareness of sustainable resource use with concrete data. The Faculty of Art, Design, and Architecture was selected as the pilot project site; students developed technical solutions for water conservation, measured water consumption data, and analyzed the impact of these practices. The study resulted in a reduction of over 30% in water consumption, and the development of the students' awareness throughout the project was also measured.

This project enabled the measurement of students' sustainability literacy not only at a theoretical level but also through a hands-on learning process. The results established a data-based monitoring process for developing and disseminating sustainable behaviors across campus.



# SDG REPORT

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