



SDG Commitment Report 2023-2024



Report on the University Commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2023 – 2024

Almaty 202



University Profile

The Abai University, established in 1928, holds the honorary title of the oldest higher education institution in Kazakhstan. It is a major scientific and educational center of higher and postgraduate education, specializing in training in "Pedagogical Sciences," "Arts and Humanities," "Natural Sciences," "Social Sciences," "Business, Management, and Law," and others.

It has 7 institutes: "Pedagogy and Psychology", "Mathematics, Physics, and Informatics", "Philology; Arts, Culture, and Sports", "Natural Sciences and Geography", "History and Law", and the "Sorbonne-Kazakhstan" institute as well as UNESCO Chair in Education Science and Teacher Training with a particular focus on education for sustainable development.

The university boasts a distinguished faculty of 1117 academic staff and 293 administrative personnel. Within the academic ranks—comprising professors, associate professors, senior lecturers, and lecturers—women represent 67%. In administrative roles, women hold 51% of the positions. This gender representation underscores the university's commitment to fostering diversity and inclusion across all levels of its workforce.

Additionally, the university's governance includes a Board with 2 women, constituting 40% of the total 5 members, and a Board of Directors with 3 women out of 9 members, making up 30%. The total number of heads of structural units is 103, of which 52 are women, representing 50%. This gender representation underscores the university's commitment to fostering diversity and inclusion across all levels of its workforce.

The university currently enrolls approximately 17,730 students, encompassing both undergraduate and graduate programs. Notably, women make up over 70% of the total student population, while men account for around 30%. This achievement reflects the university's commitment to advancing Sustainable Development Goal 5: Gender Equality. By fostering an inclusive and equitable educational environment, the institution is successfully working towards empowering women and promoting gender balance within its community.





Campus Operations

Waste

The university has developed and is operating a 3R (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) program for the waste generated on campus. Inorganic waste is collected and sorted into three bins: plastic, aluminum, and paper. Once sorted, the waste is distributed to the local recycling center. Along with these recycling operations, the university periodically launches public awareness campaigns to promote waste reduction and reuse.

Another initiative established is reducing the use of paper and plastic across campuses starting 2024. The initiative was formalized by the Internal Directive prohibiting the use of plastic utensils, plastic straws and cellophane food packaging.

Additionally, there is a web site (<https://onde.tilda.ws/>) developed by the university student that contains interactive maps with the recycling locations (ecostations) as well as detailed guidelines on recycling and waste reduction. Across campuses there are location maps with recycling centers' addresses and other related information.

The Sustainable Paper Waste Reduction Program aims to minimize paper consumption across campus by promoting digital alternatives and responsible usage.

1. Promotion the use of digital platforms (Salem Office electronic document management system) for assignments, notes, communications and correspondence, reducing the reliance on printed materials.
2. Training students, faculty and staff on using cloud storage, e-readers, and digital collaboration tools.
3. All campus printers are set to default double-sided printing to reduce paper usage.
4. Installation of recycling bins for paper in key locations to promote responsible disposal.
5. Launching of awareness campaigns to highlight the environmental impact of paper waste and promote sustainable alternatives.
6. Encouraging faculty to adopt open-source digital textbooks and online resources instead of printed versions.
7. Installation of drinking fountains across campuses to reduce the use of plastic water bottles



Inorganic Waste Treatment Program (Aluminum, Paper, Plastic) on Campus

1. The program aims to enhance the recycling and responsible disposal of inorganic waste such as aluminum, paper, and plastic across the campus.
2. Specially designed recycling bins for each material type are installed at strategic locations like classrooms, dorms, and dining areas.
3. Each bin features a QR code, providing students and staff with easy access to guidelines on proper waste sorting and disposal practices.
4. The program focuses on minimizing contamination of recyclables by ensuring clear communication on how to clean and sort materials.
5. Student-led campaigns are organized to increase awareness and participation in the recycling program.
6. Recyclable materials collected are sent to local recycling centers, contributing to a circular economy and minimizing campus waste.
7. The initiative aligns with the campus's "Sustainable Paper Reduction Program" by encouraging responsible use and recycling of paper products, further reducing overall paper waste.

Water

The University installed 2 drinking fountains at the facilities therefore saving 47 579 plastic bottles.

Research and Education

Abai University has 7 faculties: “Pedagogy and Psychology”, “Mathematics, Physics, and Informatics”, “Philology; Arts, Culture, and Sports”, “Natural Sciences and Geography”, “History and Law”, and the "Sorbonne-Kazakhstan" institute. It enrolls 17,730 students (70% female and 30% male).

Integration of SDGs into Educational Programs

The University is integrating Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into its teaching programs in collaboration with the Center for the Promotion of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) at Okayama University in Japan. Professor



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Hiroki Fuji from the Center regularly lectures chemistry and biology students on incorporating SDGs into the curriculum. This initiative began in May 2024, with Mr. Fujii delivering lectures in September and October 2024 to further emphasize the integration of SDGs into the educational process.

Greening Education

The Asian Framework of Teacher Education for Climate Action, developed by the Asian Teacher Educators for Climate Change Education Network (ATECCCE) in collaboration with UNESCO and other organizations, aims to integrate climate change education (CCE) into teacher training across Asia.

Initiated in November 2023, the project gathers representatives from nine Asian countries to address the complexities of climate change through education. Its primary goal is to equip educators with skills for fostering critical thinking and civic engagement related to climate issues. The framework comprises three key domains: integrated curricula, innovative pedagogy, and holistic assessment of CCE. Expected outcomes include enhanced teacher expertise, aligned educational policies with global climate goals, and strengthened regional collaboration. Future prospects involve integrating advanced technologies and establishing regional centers of excellence for climate education. Notably, KazNPU is actively participating in the framework and provides regular online reports to the project administrator, Okayama University ESD Promotion Centre. This involvement underscores KazNPU's commitment to advancing climate change education within the regional network.

Events related to SDGs

Almaty energy forum.

On November 6-8, 2023, the staff of the UNESCO Chair in Education Science and Teacher Training participated in the 3rd Almaty Energy Forum held at the Kazakhstan-British Technical University.

At Kazakh British Technical University representatives of the ministries of Central Asian countries, experts in the energy sector, as well as international organizations - the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the United Nations Development Program in Kazakhstan (UNDP) gathered to raise the issue of accelerating the transition of Central Asian countries to green energy.

The dialogue participants intended to promote regional cooperation, provide



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technical capacity support, and help Central Asian countries to innovate, modernize their regional infrastructure, and create sustainable energy systems that provide safe, affordable, and zero emissions.



Abai University "A new way to decarbonize the economy (KZGT-2023)" at the first international scientific conference.

Representatives of Abay Kazakh National University took part in the first international scientific conference "NEW WAY OF DECARBONIZATION OF THE ECONOMY (KZGT-2023)" held at Al-Farabi Kazakh National University on November 8-10, 2023.

The speakers stated that the academic community, scientists and university specialists influence sustainable development and the achievement of carbon neutrality with their scientific research, development and high-quality education while creating knowledge to tackle urgent challenges of economy decarbonization and climate change adaptation.

UNESCO Chair in Education Science and Teacher Training of Abai University, PhD, Associate Professor Zh.T. Tilekova made a report on the topic "Formation of environmental norms of behavior and social responsibility of students in the context of sustainable development".

The university pays special attention to the goals of sustainable development, which is reflected in the approved Sustainable Development Policy, as well as in the results of the international Times Higher Education Impact Rankings, where the university was ranked 1st in Kazakhstan for 2 years in a row.



"From Finland to Kazakhstan: Education for sustainable future" Conference



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On November 27, 2023, the staff of the UNESCO Chair in Education Science and Teacher Training participated in the conference "Education for Sustainable Development (ESD): from Finland to Kazakhstan" held together with the Embassy of Finland and MediaNet at Narkhoz University.

High-level speakers of the Finnish government and national institutions of the Republic of Kazakhstan made presentations at the conference: Kirsi Lindroos, Director of the Secretariat of International Relations of the Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland; Aida Akhmetzhanova, Vice-President of the National Academy of Education named after Altynsarin; Brendan Dupree, director of the Research Institute Sustainable Kazakhstan of Narkhoz University, and Meirgul Alpysbaeva, National Specialist for Educational Issues, Almaty Regional Branch of UNESCO.

The event, sponsored by the Embassy of Finland, was aimed at raising awareness of national level programs and projects in the field of ESD. The participants shared the completed projects of the Medical Center and MediaNet, as well as their future plans in this regard.



International scientific-practical conference "Spiritual values of Uly Dala: education, culture and sports".

On December 8, 2023, the international scientific-practical conference "Spiritual values of the Great Plain: education, culture and sports" dedicated to the 95th anniversary of the university was organized by the University's "Art, culture and sport" institute. At the conference, associate professor J.T. Tilekova made a report on the topic " Sustainable development goals implementation policy`s program at Abay University".



Internal Seminar on SDGs



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On November 22, 2023 the Institute of History and Law of the University held a seminar with the participation of its faculty members and students. At the seminar associate professor J.T. Tilekova presented information on the UN and UNESCO organization, introduced the goals and objectives of the UNESCO Chair in Education Science and Teacher Training of the University, and also shared about the 17 goals of sustainable development.

During the seminar faculty members and students of the Institute of History and Law developed a plan on the issues of education within the framework of sustainable development goals, and it was planned to organize future events and activities on these issues within the University.



"Giving paper waste a second life" contest

From October 4 to November 4, 2023 a university wide contest "Giving paper waste a second life" was organized by the "Ayala" eco-club of the Institute of Natural Sciences and Geography with the support of UNESCO Chair in Education Science and Teacher Training.

The purpose of the contest was to give a second life to paper waste by recycling them and to increase awareness on efficient use of paper and cardboard products. According to the results of the contest, the head of the UNESCO Chair in Education Science and Teacher Training presented the awards to the students.



Popularizing the cultural heritage of Kazakhstan and Central Asia.

On November 17, 2023, the regional office of UNESCO (Almaty) in cooperation with the UNESCO Chair in Education Science and Teacher Training, the Institute of History and Law conducted a series of lectures for freshman students of "History and Sociology". The event was aimed at promoting the cultural heritage of Kazakhstan



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and Central Asia through methods of restoring and reconstructing historical and cultural objects.

The lecture series was intended for all young people interested in history and culture. The lectures covered the following topics: Princess Urzhar and her secrets (history of discovery, research and rebirth); Royal horses from frozen archeological sites: Saka mounds of the Berel valley; Altai riddles and solutions, Interdisciplinary studies.

On November 21, 2023 as a follow-up of the event the UNESCO Chair in Education Science and Teacher Training held a round table with freshman students of "History and Sociology" of the Institute of History and Law on the topic "Princess Urzhar and her secrets".

This event was organized on the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention and the 20th anniversary of the World Community Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.



"Education in the Interests of Sustainable Development" training

On October 6, 2023, in cooperation with the "Teachers Lab" company, a training was held for the teaching staff of the University introducing the concept of "Education in the interests of sustainable development". In the course of the training, the faculty of the university and the participants were introduced to the goals and objectives of the UNESCO Chair, as well as the its plans for the 2023-2024 academic year.



«Climate Change Education in Central Asia: Think and Do for a Better Future» conference

The conference took place in Almaty, Kazakhstan (28-29 August, 2024),



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bringing together experts, educators, and policymakers to discuss the importance of climate education in addressing the region's environmental challenges. The event opened with remarks from representatives of CAPS Unlock and UNESCO, setting the stage for discussions on how climate change has impacted Central Asia throughout history and how societies are responding to the current crisis. Participants highlighted the importance of regional collaboration and the need for urgent action to integrate sustainable practices into both formal and informal education systems.

Throughout the sessions, key figures such as Peter Frankopan from Oxford University and other panelists discussed the global context of climate challenges and the unique issues faced by Central Asia. Speakers emphasized the critical role of education in fostering a deeper understanding of climate science and developing policies that support sustainable development. The sessions also focused on how academic curricula and grassroots movements can drive forward climate change education, offering practical insights from international experts and local organizations alike.

The conference concluded with a focus on advocacy and policy, exploring how education can influence younger generations and shape future climate policies in the region. Discussions included innovative educational practices, such as formal and informal learning initiatives, and the ways they can contribute to a more climate-conscious society. The event successfully highlighted the importance of an integrated approach to climate change education, bringing together a diverse group of stakeholders to create lasting change for a more sustainable future in Central Asia.



UN Marathon Course «My sustainable lifestyle»

The teaching staff and students of Abai University participated in the marathon course «My sustainable lifestyle» organized by the United Nations Environment Program which starts August 19, 2024 until 30 September, 2024. «My Sustainable Lifestyle» marathon course is an online learning platform that promotes learning and behavior change through action. The interactive course took participants on an exciting six-week journey in which, through exciting weekly tasks, participants become more familiar with the topics of environmental sustainability, systemic changes and the impact of their lifestyle in the areas of nutrition, accommodation,



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transport, consumption and leisure. Their impact was measured in kilograms of carbon dioxide. Upon completion of the training, participants were issued international certificates.

Publications:

1. "Transforming education" (January 31, 2023) "Bilimdi El" national newspaper, issue 4. (<https://bilimdinews.kz/?p=227498>).

2. Tilekova Zh.T. Ecological Behavior Norms and the Formation of Social Responsibility of Students in the Context of Sustainable Development // "The New Path of Decarbonizing the Economy," First International Scientific Conference, Almaty, November 8-10, 2023.

3. Tilekova Zh. Ecologization of the educational process and activities of Kazakh national pedagogical university named after Abai with the use of green technologies // 6 th International research congress on Social sciences (USOBAK), between November 02-03, 2023 organized by Gazi University and Ankara Haci Bayram Veli University Ankara/Turkiye

4. Tilekova Zh.T. Geoecological Assessment of the Land Resources of Almaty Region // Bulletin of Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, Natural Sciences Series, 2023, No. 2.

5. Tilekova Zh. Pedagogical model of formation of professional qualities of students during training natural sciences in colleges // Materials of the 3rd International Scientific Conference «Academics and Science Reviews Materials» (June 22-23, 2023). Helsinki, Finland, 2023 p -2010.