

BAKU STATE UNIVERSITY



REPORT ON SDG 16

PEACE, JUSTICE, AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



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ABSTRACT

Baku State University (hereinafter - BSU) actively contributes to Sustainable Development Goal 16 by fostering a diverse and inclusive governance structure, supporting students through an independent student union, and engaging with local stakeholders. BSU provides expert advice to government bodies, offers capacity-building initiatives for policymakers, conducts policy-focused research in collaboration with government departments, and provides a neutral platform for open discussions. Additionally, the Criminal Law Association at BSU promotes free exchange of ideas and values through social media. These initiatives collectively reflect BSU's dedication to promoting peace, justice, and strong institutions in its academic and societal engagements.

USED DATA

Interdisciplinary policies of BSU:

1. Policy on equality, diversity, and inclusion
2. Accommodation Policy
3. Student Led Society Policy.
4. Sustainable Investment Policy
5. Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy

Legislative acts

1. Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan No. 349 dated June 13, 2000, on the improvement of the education system in the Republic of Azerbaijan.
2. Resolution No. 191 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated December 4, 2001.

SDG 16. PEACE, JUSTICE, AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

CURRENT SITUATION

The Scientific Council of BSU serves as the central governing body, responsible for the overall management of BSU. It operates as a collegial body, indicating that decisions are made collectively, involving various members' input and expertise. The pivotal role of the Rector, who heads the Scientific Council, highlights their leadership in guiding the university's scientific initiatives and academic pursuits. The establishment and functioning of the Scientific Council are outlined in the "Regulation on the Scientific Council of Baku State University". This regulation provides the framework within which the Scientific Council operates, defining its responsibilities and decision-making processes.

Baku State University's commitment to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) among its academic, administrative staff, and students, as per their policy. This signifies a proactive approach towards fostering a diverse and inclusive environment within the university community. Furthermore, the composition of the Scientific Council, as described, reflects a comprehensive representation of the university's stakeholders. The inclusion of key positions such as the rector, vice-rectors, advisors, scientific secretary, deans, heads of various divisions, as well as representatives from teacher and student union committees, student youth organizations, Student Scientific Society, veterans' council, and teaching-methodical council, showcases a broad range of voices and perspectives.

This diverse representation within the Scientific Council aligns with the university's EDI policy (Policy on equality, diversity, and inclusion (1.2)), as it not only ensures participation from different academic and administrative roles but also includes student representatives and voices from various committees and organizations. Such inclusivity at the decision-making level can contribute significantly to fostering a more equitable and diverse university environment, promoting collaboration, understanding, and mutual respect among all stakeholders. Overall, the outlined approach emphasizes Baku State University's dedication to embracing EDI principles throughout its governance structure.

At the same time, BSU's Trade Union Committee, as described, plays a vital and multifaceted role in the well-being of the university's employees. Its diverse activities, ranging from improving social conditions and providing affordable catering to reinforcing

labor discipline and ensuring the health and protection of employees, showcase a comprehensive approach to employee welfare. The Committee's commitment to tasks like regulating daily activities demonstrates its dedication to enhancing the overall work environment. According to the Accommodation Policy (1.2), Baku State University's provision of exceptions and financial assistance to students and employees from socially vulnerable groups signifies a commendable commitment to fostering inclusivity and accessibility in higher education and employment. By offering support to those in need, the university demonstrates a socially responsible approach, ensuring that education and employment opportunities are accessible to individuals facing economic challenges.

Independent students' unions: Baku State University has various organizations in which students actively participate. Those organizations operate on priorities, as stated in the University's Student Led Society Policy.

The Student Trade Union Committee is highlighted as a cornerstone of student representation, demonstrating its significance through its large membership base of over 18,000 students. Its pivotal role in university affairs is indicative of its effectiveness in advocating for student interests and concerns.

The Student-Youth Organization (STU), established in 2005, serves as a dynamic platform for student participation. Its multifaceted programs, encompassing faculty meetings, event coordination, philanthropic initiatives, and concert planning, reflect a comprehensive approach to student engagement, fostering a vibrant campus life.

The Union of Independent Students (UIS), with its commitment to democratic values and inclusivity, showcases a commendable dedication to promoting student rights. Its involvement in academic pursuits, athletics, and cultural exhibitions underscores its multifaceted role, providing students with avenues for self-expression and personal development.

The BSU Volunteers Organization, founded in 2019, exemplifies the spirit of social and civic activism. With approximately 1000 student volunteers, their active participation in various events and actions demonstrates a strong commitment to community service, making a positive impact within both the university and the wider society.

The Young Scientists Council serves as a breeding ground for aspiring researchers and innovators, offering a platform for development, international

collaboration, and commercial research. Their involvement in scientific research, international activities, media strategy, and commercialization efforts signifies their proactive role in advancing research initiatives.

The Student Scientific Society plays a crucial part in BSU's research landscape, fostering research-based initiatives, competitions, seminars, and collaborations. By coordinating faculty-specific scientific societies and enhancing the quality of education and research, they contribute significantly to the academic excellence of the university.

Lastly, the active participation of the students from the Faculty of Law at Baku State University (BSU) in events organized by the Azerbaijan representation of the **European Lawyer Students Association (ELSA Azerbaijan)** is a testament to the international engagement and academic enthusiasm within the university. This collaboration highlights the proactive approach of BSU's law students, showcasing their eagerness to broaden their horizons beyond traditional academic boundaries. By engaging with ELSA Azerbaijan, students can connect with a broader legal community, participate in international events, and gain valuable insights into global legal practices and perspectives.

Local stakeholders: Baku State University's proactive approach to fostering collaboration with stakeholders reflects a commendable dedication to enhancing the career prospects of its students. By consistently engaging with external partners, the university demonstrates a keen understanding of the evolving demands of the labor market. The university's commitment to deep analysis of current labor market needs showcases a forward-thinking mindset. This strategic approach not only benefits students by aligning their education with real-world requirements but also strengthens the university's reputation as an institution dedicated to producing industry-relevant graduates. Baku State University's emphasis on cooperation and market analysis exemplifies its commitment to preparing students for successful and meaningful careers. Such initiatives not only empower students with practical skills and knowledge but also contribute significantly to the overall socio-economic development of the region by producing skilled professionals tailored to the demands of the contemporary job market.

Baku State University's commitment to sustainable investment, as outlined in its Sustainable Investment Policy (2.2 of objectives and Action 9), reflects a forward-thinking and socially responsible approach. The university's dedication to promoting

sustainable services through various communication channels demonstrates a proactive effort to engage both internal and external stakeholders. The emphasis on establishing partnerships with companies and organizations that prioritize fair labor practices, engage with stakeholders, and demonstrate a commitment to social welfare progress aligns with contemporary ethical standards and sustainability goals. By fostering collaborations with entities that share similar values, Baku State University not only reinforces its commitment to social responsibility but also contributes to broader societal progress. This policy signifies the university's awareness of its role as a catalyst for positive change. By promoting sustainable practices and engaging in ethical partnerships, Baku State University actively participates in building a more equitable and sustainable future. Such initiatives not only reflect the institution's commitment to ethical conduct but also inspire a culture of responsibility and social consciousness within the university community and beyond.

Criminal Law Association. The purpose and nature of the events organized by the Criminal Law Association.

- 1. Event Description:** It describes the event as a regular meeting within the framework of the "Theoretical and Practical Exchange in Fighting Crime" project. This provides context about the event's focus on crime-related topics.
- 2. Guest Speakers:** The statement mentions the invitation of well-known lawyers from various legal fields, which suggests a diverse range of expertise and knowledge-sharing opportunities for students.
- 3. Benefits for Students:** It highlights the benefits for students, including the acquisition of theoretical and practical knowledge and advice on faculty life. This emphasizes the event's educational and mentorship aspects.
- 4. Student Interest:** The statement indicates that the meeting generated significant interest among students and association members, underscoring its relevance and popularity within the faculty.
- 5. Content Shared:** It mentions that the lawyers shared information about their professional activities, life experiences related to fighting crime, and challenging criminal cases. This provides insight into the valuable content of the event.

Curriculum: A curriculum or academic program in the field of Jurisprudence, specifically regarding the specialization in Anti-corruption law:

- **Clarity and Specificity:** The statement is clear and specific in terms of the date (14.09.2020) and the subject (Anti-corruption law) under discussion. This is essential for academic or administrative communication.
- **Curriculum Structure:** It mentions that "Anti-corruption law" is part of the elective subjects within the annual employee Curriculum for the "Jurisprudence" specialty. This provides insight into the structure of the curriculum and what students can expect in their program.
- **Specialization and Direction:** It highlights that "Anti-corruption law" is offered within the specialization of "Jurisprudence" and is part of the bachelor's professional period in the same field. This information helps students understand how the subject fits into their specialization.

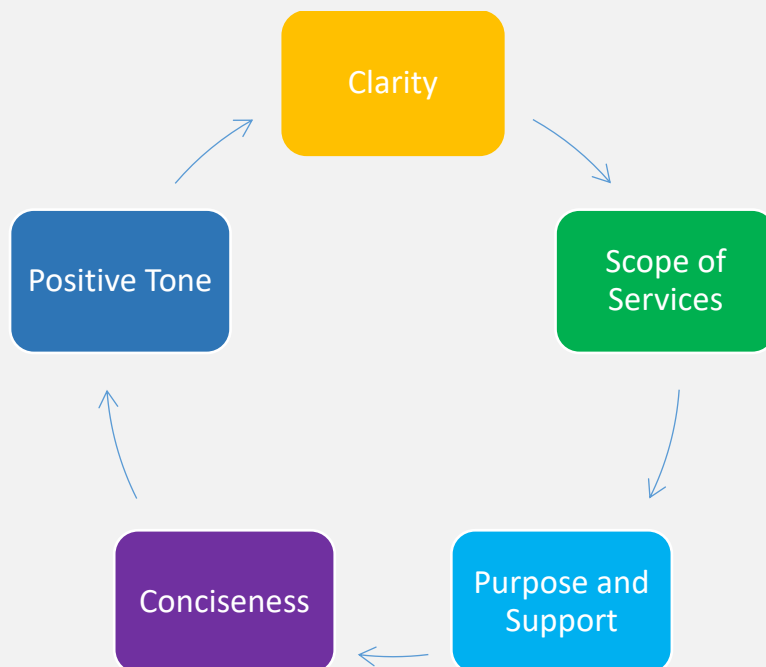
According to Action 3 of the short-term plan of the plan of Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy (ABCP), one of the main aims is organizing training, seminars, and other such kind of informative sessions for students and employees on the importance of achieving set objectives of anti-bribery and corruption policy. On the other hand, the publication of the manual for corruption-related offenses is planned in the future. This textbook will help students to master their future specialization better.

According to the opportunities of Student Led Society Policy, one of them is encouraging collaborative efforts among different academic disciplines to address the complex and diverse Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The statement clearly and effectively conveys the importance of academic freedom and the need for transparency in the educational system. It underscores the significance of academic freedom at all levels of education, which is a fundamental principle in academia. The statement emphasizes the importance of giving preference to subjects that students prefer, which aligns with the idea of tailoring education to individual interests and needs. It highlights the role of transparency in the educational system and mentions that Baku State University constantly informs students about subject choices. This commitment to transparency and communication is a positive aspect. The statement suggests that the university actively creates accessible conditions for students, indicating a proactive approach to facilitating students' educational experiences. While the statement mentions transparency and accessible conditions, it lacks specific examples or details about how transparency is achieved and what these accessible conditions entail. Providing specific examples or initiatives would make the statement more impactful. The statement is clear and effectively communicates its message about research subject

selection and academic freedom. It highlights the significance of transparent selection of research subjects, indicating a commitment to openness and fairness in the research process. The statement affirms that master's and doctoral students at Baku State University have the freedom to conduct independent research. This emphasizes the university's commitment to academic autonomy. The statement is concise and to the point, making it easy to understand. It conveys a positive message about the university's stance on academic freedom and research subject selection. While the statement mentions academic freedom, it could benefit from providing specific examples or policies that demonstrate how this freedom is supported and protected at the university.

Working with government:

Section 4 of the Policy on equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) defines the legal service as a subsystem. The Faculty of Law of Baku State University provides expert services in the adoption of Plenum Decisions of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Opinions are provided by expert lawyers on different legal fields. Baku State University expresses its support for the establishment of sound legal thinking in the country and the correct application of laws.



Clarity: The statement is clear and effectively conveys the services offered by the Faculty of Law.

Scope of Services: It explains that expert lawyers from the faculty provide opinions on various legal fields, which indicates a broad range of expertise.

Purpose and Support: The statement highlights the university's commitment to supporting sound legal thinking in the country and the proper application of laws. This demonstrates a commitment to the legal and constitutional framework of Azerbaijan.

Conciseness: The statement is concise and to the point, making it easy to understand.

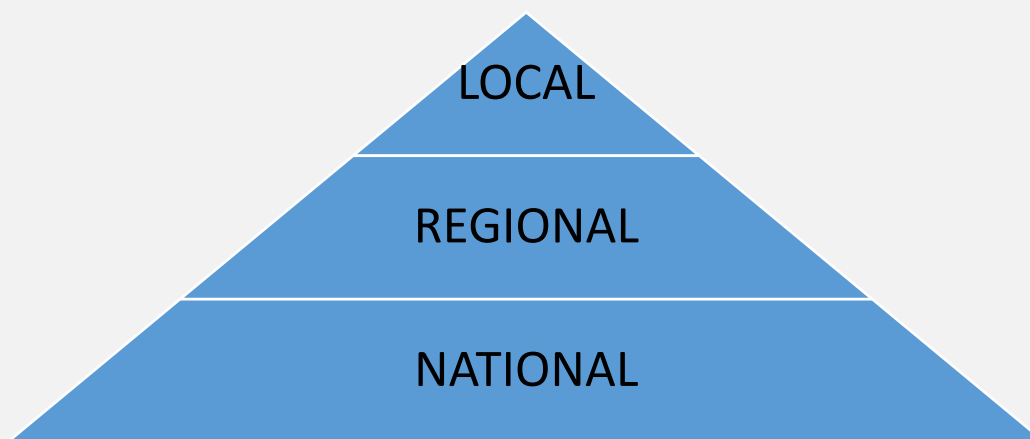
Positive Tone: The statement conveys a positive message about the university's role in supporting legal processes and the legal community in Azerbaijan.

Outreach: According to the Sustainable Procurement Policy Objectives (2.2) one of the main goals is applying global best practices.

Local – "Young Talents" Lyceum under BSU is guided by the recommendations of the Scientific Council of BSU, as well as the latest achievements of modern pedagogy on education and upbringing, in addition to taking as a basis the exemplary educational programs of general education schools.

Regional – Collaboration between Baku State University and partner universities. It covers a wide range of areas of cooperation, including education, research, innovation, commercialization of scientific knowledge, social life, and international relations. This demonstrates a comprehensive approach to collaboration. The mention of exchanging international experience indicates a commitment to cross-cultural learning and sharing best practices.

National - It is notable that the dual diploma program at the master's level in Petrochemistry specialization between Baku State University (BSU) and Satbayev Kazakh National Research Technical University, Thus, the goal here is to train specialists who have comprehensive knowledge in the field of oil and gas chemistry, fuels, and the purchase of technically important substances based on natural hydrocarbon resources, who have modern thinking, who know how to solve problems, and who have the ability to apply them realistically.



The collaboration between Baku State University and various state institutions and companies is a clear testament to the university's commitment to fostering meaningful partnerships. By actively engaging with relevant state bodies and private companies, Baku State University demonstrates a proactive approach in bridging the gap between academic knowledge and practical application. These agreements serve as valuable platforms for knowledge exchange, research collaboration, and real-world application of academic insights. Such interactions not only enrich the educational experience for the students but also contribute significantly to the advancement of research, innovation, and professional development. The series of agreements and memoranda signed between BSU, and prominent state institutions underscore the university's proactive approach in fostering meaningful partnerships and advancing the realms of education, research, and professional development.

The Agreement on Cooperation between the Bar Association of the Republic of Azerbaijan and BSU (01.05.2021) signifies a significant collaboration between legal practitioners and academia, ensuring the alignment of legal education with the practical needs of the legal profession.

The Agreement on Cooperation between the General Prosecutor's Office and Baku State University (05.04.2021) emphasizes the importance of legal education and research in the context of the legal system, fostering an environment where academic knowledge contributes to the enhancement of the justice system.

The collaboration with the Intellectual Property Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan (Memorandum of Understanding signed on 07.08.2022) highlights BSU's involvement in cutting-edge scientific research and innovation, particularly in the domain

of intellectual property, demonstrating the university's commitment to advancing knowledge-based economies.

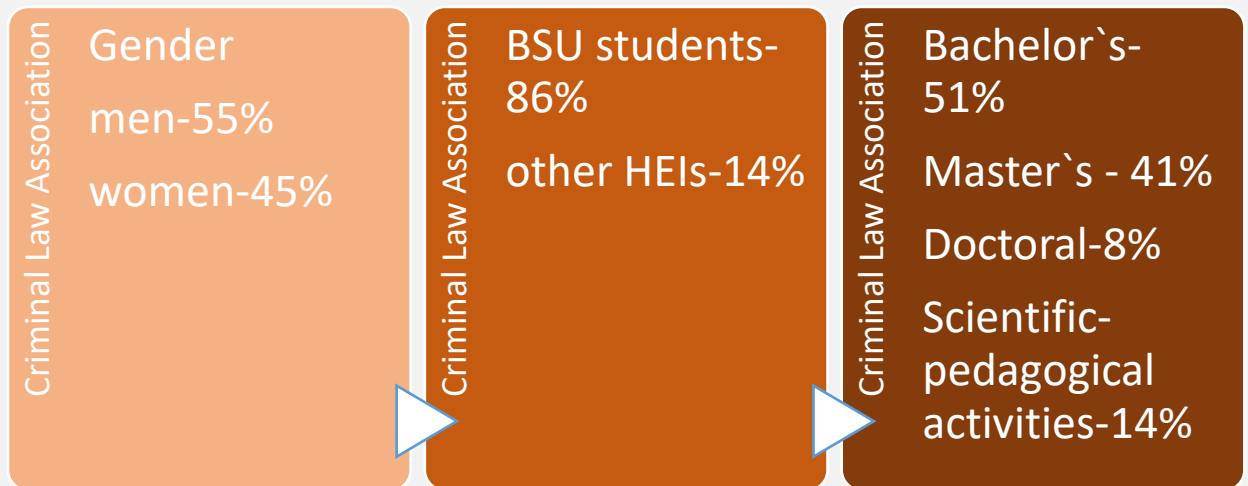
The meeting to discuss cooperation issues between the Training Center of the State Tax Service and BSU (04.04.2021) showcases BSU's dedication to enhancing professional skills and training, aligning the curriculum with the evolving needs of the financial sector, and preparing students for successful careers in taxation and related fields.

The Memorandum of Agreement between BSU and KOBIA, dated July 12, 2021, with a focus on business development and economic matters. However, it would benefit from providing more specific details about the content and objectives of the agreement to offer a more comprehensive understanding of the collaboration between the two entities.

Collectively, these agreements exemplify BSU's proactive engagement with key institutions, ensuring that education is not confined within academic boundaries but extends into practical, real-world applications. This strategic approach not only enriches the learning experience for students but also bolsters the university's role as a pivotal player in shaping the future of various professional sectors in Azerbaijan.

The Criminal Law Association, established under the Department of Criminal Law and Criminology of the Law Faculty of Baku State University, creates an environment of free discussion by using various social network accounts.

Membership and promotion policy of the Association was developed within a year after the establishment of the Association. By comparison, the Criminal Law Association currently has around 70 members. I want to share the statistics for interest. Gender equality is relative: women make up 45% of membership and men make up 55%. Also, 86% of the members study at BSU, and 14% study at other higher education institutions. 51% of them are studying at the bachelor's level, 41% at the master's level, 8% are doctoral students and dissertation students, and 14% are engaged in scientific-pedagogical activities.



KEY FINDINGS

Based on the provided information and the structure of the report, here are the key findings regarding Baku State University's engagement in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions:

These key findings highlight the proactive and comprehensive approach of Baku State University in promoting SDG 16 principles. The university's efforts align with the goals of peace, justice, and strong institutions by ensuring inclusivity, representation, and open dialogue within its governance and educational structures. Furthermore, BSU's commitment to engaging with external stakeholders and fostering a culture of social responsibility underscores its significance in contributing to broader societal progress.

Comprehensive Representation in Governance: Baku State University (BSU) demonstrates comprehensive representation in its governance structure, involving students (both undergraduate and graduate), faculty, and non-faculty staff. This inclusive approach aligns with the principles of peace, justice, and strong institutions by ensuring participation from various academic and administrative roles.

Diverse and Inclusive Decision-Making: The composition of the BSU Scientific Council reflects a broad range of voices and perspectives, including the rector, vice-rectors, scientific secretary, deans, heads of various divisions, as well as representatives from teacher and student union committees, student youth organizations, Student Scientific

Society, veterans' council, and teaching-methodical council. This diverse representation enhances collaboration, understanding, and mutual respect among all stakeholders.

**Support for
Students through
Independent
Unions:**

BSU provides a platform for various student organizations, including the Student Trade Union Committee, Student-Youth Organization (STU), Union of Independent Students (UIS), BSU Volunteers, Young Scientists Council, and Student Scientific Society. These organizations serve as dynamic platforms for student participation and provide avenues for self-expression, personal development, and community service.

**Engagement with
Local
Stakeholders:**

BSU actively engages with external partners, state institutions, and companies, demonstrating a proactive approach to bridging the gap between academic knowledge and practical application. Agreements and memoranda with institutions such as the Bar Association, General Prosecutor's Office, Intellectual Property Agency, and the State Tax Service Training Center underscore the university's commitment to enhancing professional skills and promoting the correct application of laws.

**Open Discussions
and Safe Spaces:**

The Criminal Law Association at BSU plays a pivotal role in creating a safe space for discussions through various social media accounts. It fosters an environment of free exchange of ideas and values, aligning with the principles of justice, open dialogue, and multilateralism.

**Fostering a
Culture of Social
Responsibility:**

BSU's engagement with SDG 16 reflects the institution's dedication to promoting peace, justice, and strong institutions, not only within its academic programs but also within the broader community. This approach contributes to the socio-economic development of the region by producing professionals tailored to the demands of the contemporary job market and legal system.

FUTURE GOALS

As future goals for Baku State University (BSU) in its engagement with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16, there are several steps and initiatives the institution can consider. These goals should align with the principles of peace, justice, and strong institutions. Here are some suggestions:

