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CAUCASUS UNIVERSITY

# Caucasus University

# Sustainable Development Goals Report

# 2025





## *PREAMBLE*

Caucasus University (CU) has embraced sustainability as a core value to enhance its mission in education, research, and community engagement. The university is committed to fostering inclusive and responsible growth, ensuring that its initiatives contribute to the well-being of its academic community and society at large.

As part of this vision, CU places special emphasis on equity, inclusion, and social responsibility, addressing the needs of its most vulnerable members while ensuring that all students, faculty, and staff benefit from a supportive and sustainable environment.

Research and education remain at the heart of CU's sustainability efforts, ensuring that knowledge serves as a driver of positive change. More recently, the university has increased its focus on sustainable infrastructure, green campus initiatives, and student-centered services, reinforcing its dedication to long-term sustainability.

Building on best practices across its 11 schools, CU has taken steps to map and consolidate its sustainability-related activities. The university has actively engaged in SDG-aligned research projects, policy development, and community outreach, making significant contributions to local and global sustainability efforts.

To further institutionalize sustainability, CU has initiated a strategic approach to align with international sustainability frameworks and strengthen its presence in global rankings. Key milestones include the publication of sustainability-related policies, the organization of annual sustainability-focused events, and participation in regional and international sustainability networks.

Caucasus University is committed to measuring and continuously enhancing its contribution to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. In 2025, the University achieved an important

international milestone by being included in the Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings 2025, one of the world's leading assessments of universities' contributions to sustainable development. This recognition reflects CU's ongoing commitment to integrating sustainability across its education, research, governance, community engagement, and institutional operations.

Further strengthening its international standing, Caucasus University was also included in the QS World University Rankings by Region 2026. This achievement highlights the University's growing international reputation and strong performance across key indicators, including academic reputation, employer reputation, international student diversity, and graduate employability. Together, these recognitions underscore CU's commitment to academic excellence, internationalization, and societal impact.

Participation in internationally recognized ranking systems enables the University to benchmark its performance against global standards, monitor progress in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals, and identify opportunities for continuous improvement. These achievements reaffirm Caucasus University's strategic commitment to sustainable development and its ambition to strengthen its global impact through excellence in education, research, innovation, and partnerships. Caucasus University (CU) actively engages in sustainability-focused networks, both regionally and internationally, reaffirming its commitment to sustainable development through knowledge-sharing, collaboration, and the adoption of best practices.

CU is a member of the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI)[1] and PRME[2] (The Principles for Responsible Management Education) joining a network of over 1,600 higher education institutions from more than 152 countries that work closely with the United Nations to promote global priorities such as peace, human rights, and sustainable development.

CU’s membership in the above-mentioned networks marks a significant step forward in aligning its academic, research, and social engagement strategies with global sustainable development efforts. Through this network, CU will continue to foster innovation, inclusivity, and impactful research, reinforcing its mission to drive meaningful change at local, regional, and international levels.

[1] https://www.un.org/en/academicimpact
[2] https://www.unprme.org/search/

## *CU MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES*



***Mission***: Caucasus University's mission is to prepare morally grounded, highly qualified professionals for both local and international markets. Through research-oriented teaching, we equip individuals with the skills and ethical values necessary to advance democratic ideals, fostering a knowledgeable, capable society that is responsive to modern educational demands.

***Vision***: We aspire to be a globally recognized institution where all stakeholders can realize their fullest potential. Caucasus University envisions an educational environment that promotes growth, inclusivity, and international outreach, upholding ethical standards and academic excellence.

***Values***: Guided by our values, we contribute to the SDGs by fostering a Spirit of Innovation, Inclusion and Diversity, Academic Freedom, and Community Proximity, along with a deep commitment to Caring for the Country's Development. Our strategic priorities underpin our approach to sustainable development:

1. Intensification of Scientific Research to enhance relevance and innovation.
2. Continuous Improvement of Teaching and Learning Quality to uphold academic excellence.
3. Internationalization to foster cross-border collaboration and global competency.

These directions guide our contributions to the SDGs and serve as the foundation for the achievements highlighted in this report. Our guiding slogan, "Studium Pretium Libertatis" – Knowledge is the Foundation of Freedom – captures our commitment to advancing a more sustainable, equitable world.

# *SUSTAINABILITY IN RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND THIRD MISSION*

Caucasus University strategically integrates education, research, and third mission activities to advance the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In education, CU has embedded sustainability into curricula across its 11 schools, offering over 230 courses aligned with the SDGs, particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions). In research, CU's scholarly output continues to grow, with numerous publications and funded projects directly addressing SDGs such as health (SDG 3), Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure (SDG 9), Partnerships for the Goals (SDG 17) and Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8)**.** Research is informed by global challenges and contributes to policy development, innovation, and societal impact. CU's third mission further extends this engagement, with over 50 activities annually supporting lifelong learning, knowledge transfer, and social inclusion. These initiatives include entrepreneurship programs, cultural preservation, community outreach, and student empowerment. Startup Pre-Acceleration Program CUnicorn[3] and PRODIGE[4] foster innovation and digital transformation, while collaborations such as the SDG Innovation Accelerator and ENRICHER HUBS[5] enhance regional development and green tourism. Through this comprehensive approach, CU reinforces its mission to foster responsible leadership, democratic values, and sustainable development at local, regional, and global levels.

## *RESEARCH*

In line with its academic mission and societal responsibility, CU continues to strengthen its commitment to sustainable development through an expanding portfolio of scholarly research. The 2025 bibliometric data extracted from the Scopus database given below demonstrate the university's sustained and growing contribution to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

[3] https://cu.edu.ge/en/innovation-and-enterpreneurship-center/startup-pre-acceleration-program-cunicorn

4 Promoting High-quality Digital Education in Georgia (PRODIGE) is to promote digital higher education in Georgia by implementing relevant legislative changes and strengthening the capacities of higher educational institution

5 The "Designing Green Tourism Concept through Learning" (ENRICHER hubs) project focuses on bridging the skill and competence gaps between Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and the labor market, with a specific emphasis on fostering sustainable tourism in Georgia and Moldova. This initiative aims to raise awareness and enhance the concept of green tourism services, aligning with sustainable tourism practices.

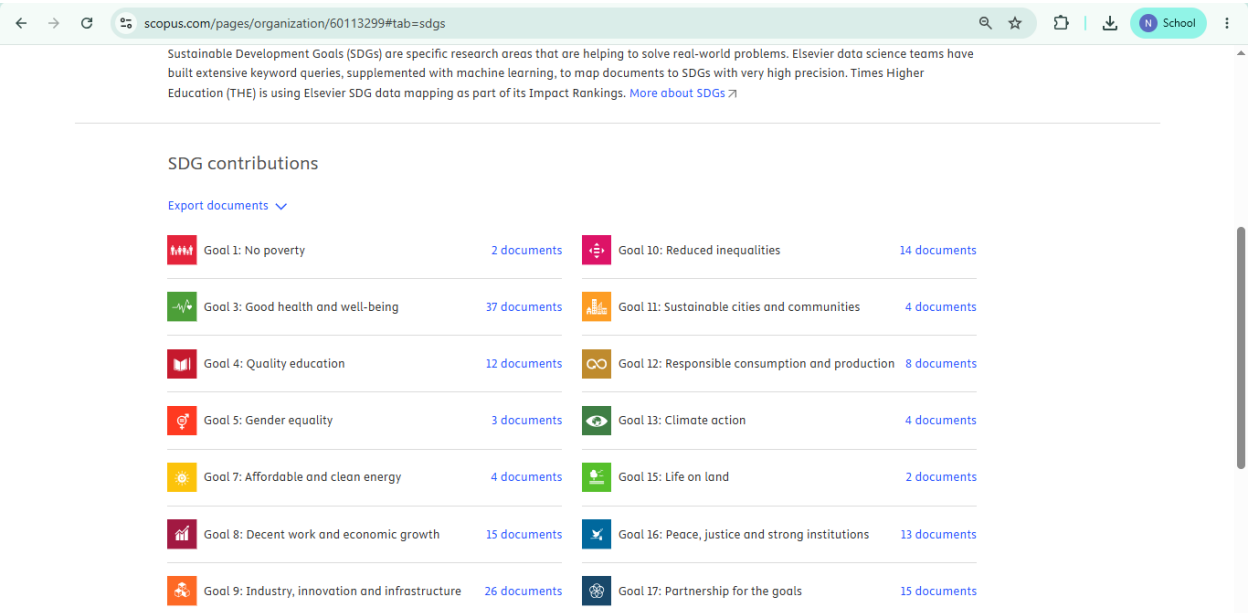



*Figure X. Scopus Bibliometric Data for Caucasus University (2025)*

CU has experienced significant growth in its research performance. According to Scopus, the university's scholarly output increased from 206 publications involving 54 authors in 2024 to 310 publications produced by 85 authors in 2025. This notable increase reflects the continued expansion of CU's research capacity, enhanced international academic visibility, and the growing participation of its faculty members in high-quality scholarly research.

CU's research contributions span a wide range of the Sustainable Development Goals. The largest number of publications is associated with Goal 3 - Good Health and Well-being, with 37 documents, highlighting the university's increasing research activity in healthcare, public health, and well-being. This is followed by Goal 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, with 26 publications, demonstrating a strong institutional focus on technological innovation, digital transformation, and sustainable infrastructure.

Substantial research activity is also evident in Goal 17 - Partnerships for the Goals and Goal 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth, each accounting for 15 publications, reflecting CU's commitment to international research collaboration and sustainable economic development. Goal 10 - Reduced Inequalities is represented by 14 publications, while Goal 16 - Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions accounts for 13 publications, emphasizing the university's contribution to research on governance, institutional development, and social justice. Goal 4 - Quality Education includes 12 publications, further demonstrating CU's sustained emphasis on educational quality, innovation, and equitable access to learning.

Additional research contributions are recorded in Goal 12 - Responsible Consumption and Production (8 publications); Goals 7 - Affordable and Clean Energy, 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities, and 13 - Climate Action (4 publications each); Goal 5 - Gender Equality (3 publications); and Goals 1 - No Poverty and 15 - Life on Land (2 publications each).

Overall, these findings illustrate that CU's research portfolio addresses a diverse range of economic, social, environmental, and governance issues aligned with the United Nations

Sustainable Development Goals. The sustained growth in both research output and the number of contributing authors further highlights the university's expanding research capacity and its increasing role in advancing knowledge that supports sustainable development at the national and global levels.

The University's research continued to make significant contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals through high-quality publications indexed in Scopus. The selected publications below illustrate the breadth of research addressing health, education, sustainable infrastructure, economic development, governance, environmental sustainability, and international cooperation.

1. Barkalaia, T., Verulava, T., & Chiladze, G. (2025). *Work Motivation and Job Satisfaction among Primary Healthcare Workers in Georgia.* Hospital Topics. *(SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-being)*
2. Chakhunashvili, K., Gunashvili, G., Jobava, N., Chakhunashvili, G., & Chakhunashvili, D.G. (2025). *Collateral Damage: Cardiovascular and Respiratory Implications of Tear Gas Deployment During Peaceful Protest.* Toxicology Reports. *(SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-being)*
3. Chakhunashvili, K., Kvirkvelia, E., & Chakhunashvili, D.G. (2025). *Atypical Development and Swift Resolution of an Ulcerated Hemangioma: A Case Report.* Journal of Medical Case Reports. *(SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-being)*
4. Verulava, T. (2025). *The Knowledge, Attitude and Practices of Pregnant Women in Preventing Iron Deficiency Anemia in Georgia.* One Health and Risk Management. *(SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-being)*
5. Verulava, T., & Abzianidze, S. (2025). *Patterns of Cannabinoid, Hallucinogen, and Stimulant Use Among Young Adults in Georgia.* Bulgarian Journal of Psychiatry. *(SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-being)*
6. Tskhadaia, G. (2025). *The Legitimizing Role of International Rankings: The Case Study of Georgia.* NISPAcee Journal of Public Administration and Policy. *(SDG 4 – Quality Education)*
7. Zhaxygulova, D., Iavich, M., Rakhmetullina, S.J., & Alipbayev, K.A. (2025). *Secure and Energy-Aware Cryptographic Framework for IoT-Enabled UAV Systems.* Symmetry. *(SDG 7 – Affordable and Clean Energy)*
8. Vairagade, R.S., Bitla, L.S., Pawar, R., & Ghode, S.D. (2025). *Hybrid Blockchain Software Defined Network Architecture for Secure and Energy Efficient IoT Routing.* Journal of Logistics Informatics and Service Science. *(SDG 7 – Affordable and Clean Energy)*
9. Beifert, A., Jintchveleishvili, T., & Gvarjaladze, V. (2025). *Efficiency of the Middle Corridor: Analysis Based on Empirical Evidence from Georgia's Transport Sector.* Lecture Notes in Networks and Systems. *(SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure)*
10. Verulava, T. (2025). *An Analysis of Claims Adjustment Processes in Georgia's Health Insurance Sector: Qualitative Study.* Asia Pacific Journal of Health Management. *(SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities)*
11. Eteria, E. (2025). *Assessment of Georgia's Economic Integration with the EU in Light of the Association Agreement.* Romanian Journal of European Affairs. *(SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities)*
12. Giviashvili, I., & Mgaloblishvili, A. (2025). *Neo-Byzantine Church Architecture in Georgia: Between Empire and Nation (1800–1920).* Convivium. *(SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities)*

13. Marín-Hernández, S., Pirveli, E., & Ortiz-Martínez, E. (2025). *A Lexical Journey Through Feedback on Europe's Sustainability Reporting Standards.* Revista de Contabilidad – Spanish Accounting Review. *(SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production)*
14. Pirveli, E., Ortiz-Martínez, E., & Marín-Hernández, S. (2025). *Influencing Sustainability: The Role of Lobbyist Characteristics in Shaping the EU's Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive.* Sustainability Accounting, Management and Policy Journal. *(SDG 13 – Climate Action)*
15. Akobia, E. (2025). *Georgia: Progresses in Horizontal Coordination Along the EU Accession Path.* In Horizontal Intergovernmental Coordination at Local and Regional Levels: Evidence from Europe and Beyond. *(SDG 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions)*
16. Abuseridze, G., & Kikilashvili, G. (2025). *The Role of the Judiciary in the Modern Legal State and Its Interaction with Domestic and International Law.* In Globalization, Global Security and New International Realities for Modern Democracies. *(SDG 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions)*
17. Abuseridze, G., & Tumalavičius, V. (2025). *International Legal Frameworks and Global Responses to Russia's Invasion of Ukraine.* In Cultural Heritage Protection and Restoration in Conflict and Post-Conflict Zones. *(SDG 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions)*
18. Svanadze, V., Iavich, M., & Lukashenko, V. (2025). *Geopolitical and Technical Dimensions of Internet Fragmentation.* CEUR Workshop Proceedings. *(SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals)*.

## *SDG-ALIGNED RESEARCH PROJECTS*

The following research initiatives, supported by the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia and other academic platforms, reflect the institution's growing commitment to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These projects address critical themes such as health, environmental sustainability, gender equality, peacebuilding, and corporate responsibility, demonstrating interdisciplinary approaches and societal impact.

responsibility, demonstrating interdisciplinary approaches and societal impact.

1. Rcheulishvili K., "The research project (2023-2025) 'Palliative Care Practice in Georgia: At the Intersection of Sociocultural, Theological, and Natural Science Perspectives' (YS-23-900), which won in the Young Scientists Grant Competition of the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia."
2. Khutsishvili T., Print and Online Catalogue of Georgian Cultural Monuments in the Historical Regions of Turkey - Speri, Baiburt, and Lazeti. HE-18-1109. Project Funded by the Shota Rustaveli Scientific Foundation, 2021-2025 (also aligns with SDG 15 and SDG 17)
3. Pirveli E., “Gender Equality and Environmental Sustainability in Georgian Corporate Sector’s High Echelons” (FR-24-1868), Time: 04.2024 – 04.2027, Basic State Research Grant 2024, Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation., (also aligns with SDG 16)
4. Pirveli E., “Corporate Diversity Reporting in Emerging Georgia: A Text Mining Approach Amidst COVID-19 Pandemic” (FR-21-1248) Time: 03.2022 – 03.2025 Basic State Research Grant 2021, Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation (also aligns with SDG 8)

5. Pirveli E., "Environmental, Social and Governance Indicators of Sustainability Reporting: An Emerging Country" (FR-22-4093), Time: 03.2023 – 03.2026 Basic State Research Grant 2022, Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation, Principal Investigator
6. Pirveli E., "CSR Disclosure, Earnings Management and Corporate Governance: A Georgian Perspective" (FR-23-5672) Time: 12.2023 – 12.2026, Basic State Research Grant 2023, Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation, Principal Investigator
7. Popiashvili N., "Resilient Women and Youth for Peace and Dialogue" - Trainer (2024-25)

*EDUCATION*

**Integration of the Sustainable Development Goals into the Curriculum**

In 2025, Caucasus University continued to strengthen the integration of sustainability across its academic portfolio by applying the curriculum mapping methodology introduced in 2024, adapted from the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS[6]). The mapping covered all eleven academic schools and assessed the extent to which sustainability is embedded in teaching and learning across the University's academic programmes.

The methodology distinguishes between two categories of SDG-related courses:

- Sustainability-focused courses, in which sustainable development constitutes the primary subject and learning objective; and
- Sustainability-inclusive courses, in which sustainability concepts are meaningfully integrated into broader disciplinary content.

This approach provides a comprehensive assessment of sustainability education by capturing both the depth of specialised sustainability teaching and the breadth of sustainability integration across the curriculum. It enables the University to monitor progress in mainstreaming Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), identify areas of disciplinary strength, and support the continuous enhancement of curricula aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

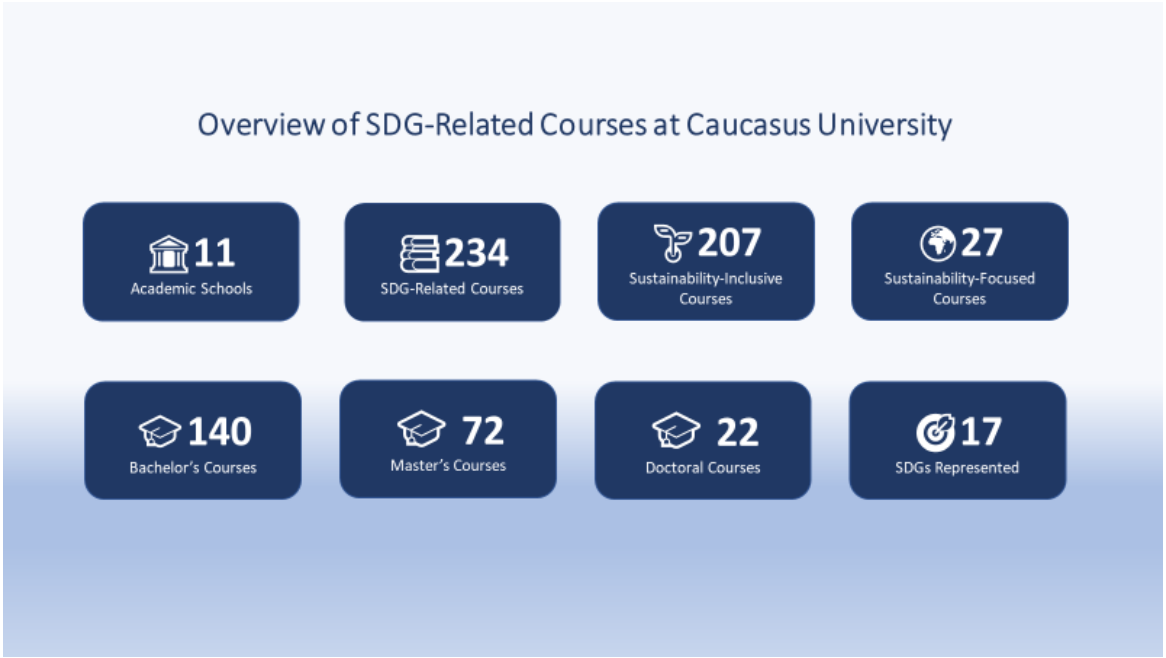



*Figure 1. Overview of SDG-Related Courses at Caucasus University (2025)*

[6] https://stars.aashe.org/

The curriculum mapping demonstrates that sustainable development has been embedded throughout the University's educational portfolio. The analysis identified 234 SDG-related courses offered across all eleven academic schools, confirming that sustainability is integrated throughout the institution rather than concentrated in a limited number of disciplines. Of these, 207 courses (88.5%) were classified as sustainability-inclusive. In comparison, 27 courses (11.5%) were identified as sustainability-focused, illustrating that Caucasus University primarily adopts a mainstreaming approach by integrating sustainability concepts throughout existing curricula while also offering specialised sustainability education.

The mapping further demonstrates that SDG-related learning opportunities are available at all academic levels, comprising 140 bachelor's, 72 master's, and 22 doctoral courses. This distribution reflects the University's progressive approach to sustainability integration across academic programmes, whereby undergraduate programmes establish foundational sustainability competencies, postgraduate programmes develop advanced professional expertise, and doctoral education contributes to sustainability-oriented research and knowledge creation.

Collectively, the identified courses address all 17 Sustainable Development Goals, demonstrating the interdisciplinary nature of sustainability education at Caucasus University. Rather than focusing exclusively on environmental sustainability, the curriculum encompasses the full spectrum of sustainable development, including responsible economic growth, social inclusion, innovation, governance, health, education, and global partnerships. This comprehensive integration reflects the University's strategic commitment to preparing graduates capable of contributing to sustainable development across diverse professional and societal contexts.

## Sustainability-Inclusive Courses

### *Sustainability-Inclusive Courses Across Academic Programmes*

The 2025 curriculum mapping identified 207 sustainability-inclusive courses offered across bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programmes. These courses integrate sustainable development concepts into broader disciplinary contexts, ensuring that sustainability competencies are developed irrespective of students' fields of study. Rather than treating sustainability as a standalone subject, sustainability-inclusive courses embed environmental, social, economic, and governance perspectives within discipline-specific learning outcomes.

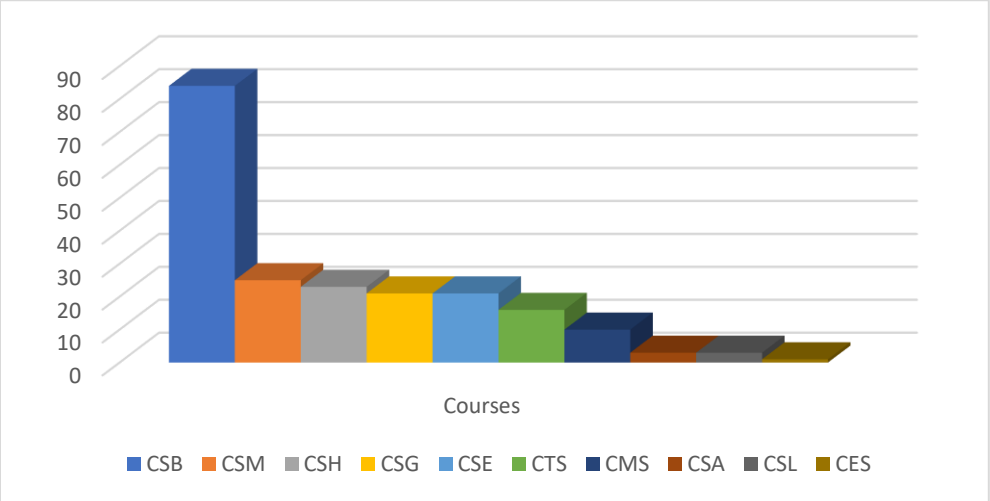



*Figure 2. Sustainability-Inclusive Courses by Schools*

Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of sustainability-inclusive courses across the University's academic schools. The results reveal three distinct patterns of curriculum integration.

First, the Caucasus School of Business (CSB) demonstrates the highest degree of sustainability mainstreaming, accounting for approximately 40% of all sustainability-inclusive courses identified during the mapping exercise. This reflects the systematic integration of sustainability principles across responsible management, entrepreneurship, finance, marketing, innovation, and organizational leadership.

Second, substantial curriculum integration is evident within the Caucasus School of Media (CSM), the Caucasus School of Humanities (CSH), the Caucasus School of Governance (CSG), and the Caucasus School of Economics (CSE). Across these disciplines, sustainability is embedded through themes such as ethical communication, social inclusion, public governance, sustainable economic development, innovation, citizenship, and institutional effectiveness.

Finally, specialised contributions are provided by the Caucasus Tourism School (CTS), Caucasus Medical School (CMS), Caucasus School of Architecture (CSA), Caucasus School of Law (CSL), and the Caucasus Education School (CES). Although these schools contribute smaller numbers of sustainability-inclusive courses, they integrate sustainability within highly discipline-specific contexts, including sustainable tourism, public health, resilient urban development, justice and governance, and inclusive education.

Collectively, these results demonstrate that sustainability is embedded across the University's entire academic portfolio. Rather than being concentrated within a limited number of programmes, sustainability serves as a cross-cutting educational principle that supports discipline-specific learning and professional competence across all fields of study.

The distribution of sustainability-inclusive courses across academic levels demonstrates that sustainability education is embedded throughout students' educational pathways. Bachelor's programmes account for the largest share of sustainability-inclusive courses, providing students with broad exposure to sustainable development principles during the early stages of their academic studies. This reflects the University's strategy of ensuring that sustainability literacy is established as a foundational graduate competency across disciplines.

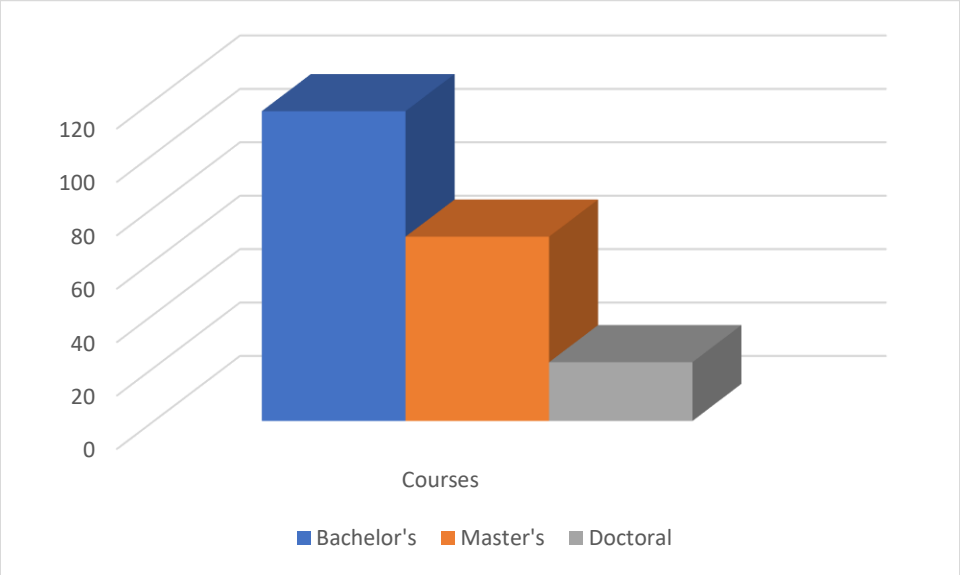



*Figure 3. Sustainability-Inclusive Courses by Academic Level*

At the postgraduate level, master's programmes further strengthen sustainability competencies by integrating advanced professional applications, interdisciplinary perspectives, and sector-specific challenges into teaching and learning. Doctoral programmes contribute through research-oriented education, enabling doctoral candidates to address sustainability challenges through original research and knowledge creation.

This progression illustrates a coherent approach to curriculum development in which sustainability education evolves from foundational awareness at the undergraduate level to specialised professional competence and research excellence at advanced levels of study.

To further examine the breadth of sustainability integration, the curriculum mapping analysed the frequency with which individual Sustainable Development Goals are represented across sustainability-inclusive courses.

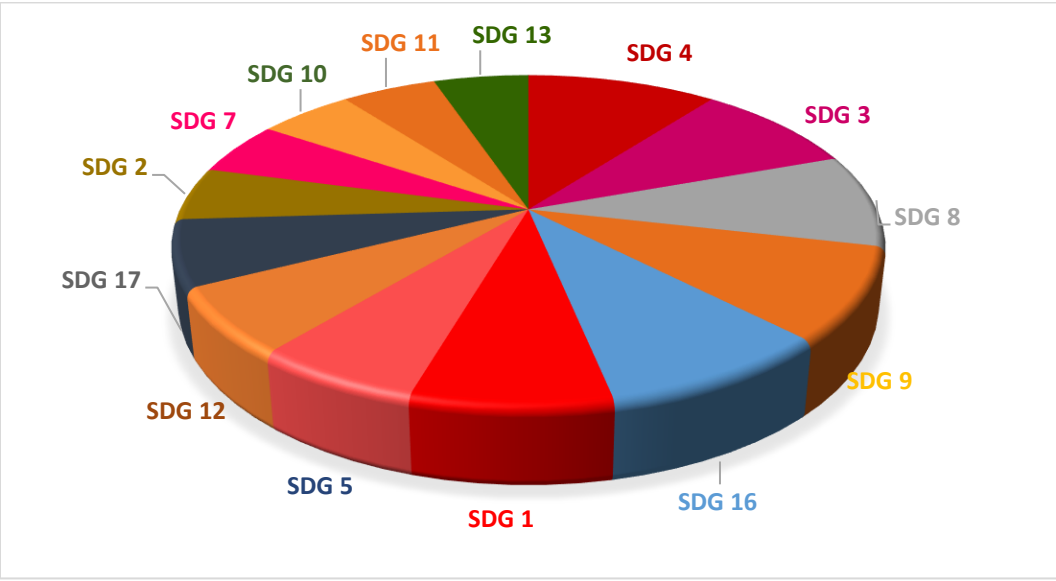


*Figure 4. Frequency of Sustainable Development Goal Integration Across Sustainability-Inclusive Courses (2025)*

The results indicate that SDG 4 (Quality Education) is the most frequently integrated goal, reflecting the University's institutional commitment to promoting inclusive, equitable, and high-quality education across all disciplines. The strong representation of SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) further demonstrates that sustainability education at Caucasus University is closely linked to responsible economic development, innovation, ethical leadership, institutional resilience, and societal well-being.

A second group of frequently represented goals includes SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). Their widespread integration reflects the multidisciplinary nature of the University's curricula and highlights the importance of social inclusion, responsible resource management, collaboration, and global citizenship across diverse academic disciplines.

Additional representation of SDGs 2, 7, 10, 11, and 13 demonstrates that sustainability themes extend beyond the University's core disciplinary strengths and encompass food systems, clean energy, reduced inequalities, sustainable urban development, and climate action. Although SDGs 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 14 (Life Below Water), and 15 (Life on Land) are less frequently represented within sustainability-inclusive courses, these areas receive focused attention through the University's specialised sustainability-focused curriculum, particularly within architecture, environmental design, and tourism programmes.

Overall, the distribution of SDGs demonstrates that Caucasus University has adopted a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach to sustainability education. Rather than concentrating exclusively on environmental sustainability, the curriculum addresses the economic, social, institutional, and governance dimensions of sustainable development, equipping graduates with the knowledge and competencies needed to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda across a broad range of professional contexts.

**Sustainability-Focused Courses**

The 2025 curriculum mapping identified 27 sustainability-focused courses offered across bachelor's and master's programmes. Unlike sustainability-inclusive courses, these courses place sustainable development at the centre of teaching and learning, enabling students to develop advanced knowledge and specialised competencies related to environmental sustainability, climate action, resource management, and sustainable development.

Together, these courses form the University's dedicated sustainability curriculum, complementing the broader integration of sustainability across disciplines by providing opportunities for in-depth study of sustainability challenges and solution-oriented approaches.

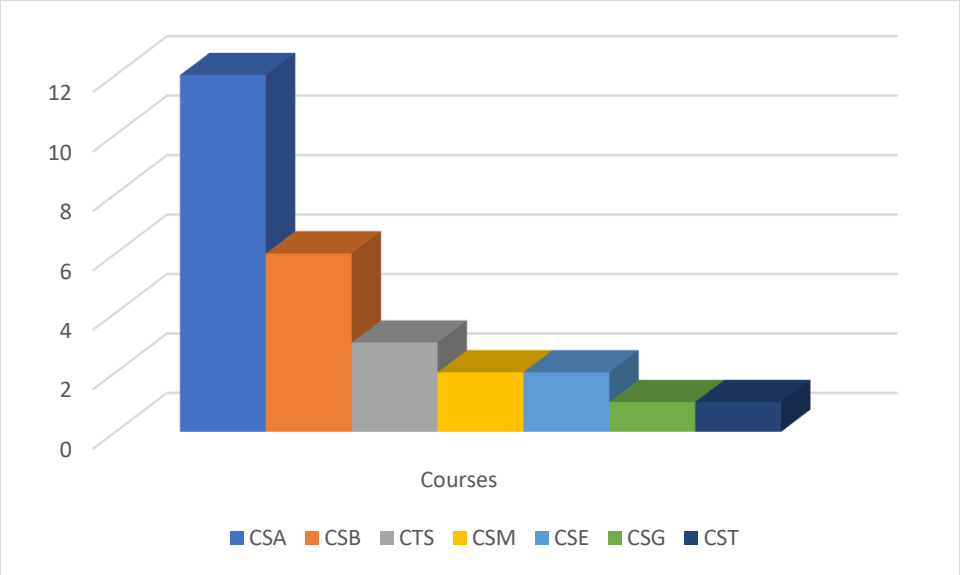



*Figure 5. Distribution of Sustainability-Focused Courses by Schools*

Figure 5 illustrates the distribution of sustainability-focused courses across the University's academic schools. The results reveal a clear concentration of specialised sustainability education within disciplines where sustainability constitutes a core professional competency.

The Caucasus School of Architecture (CSA) offers the largest number of sustainability-focused courses, accounting for nearly half of the University's dedicated sustainability curriculum. This reflects the school's emphasis on sustainable architecture, climate-responsive design, resilient urban development, and environmentally responsible planning.

The Caucasus School of Business (CSB) represents the second largest contributor, integrating sustainability into responsible management, sustainable entrepreneurship, innovation, and business transformation. Together, Architecture and Business form the principal pillars of specialised sustainability education at Caucasus University.

Additional contributions are provided by the Caucasus Tourism School (CTS), the Caucasus School of Economics (CSE), the Caucasus School of Media (CSM), the Caucasus School of Governance (CSG), and the Caucasus School of Technology (CST). Although these schools offer fewer sustainability-focused courses, they broaden the University's sustainability portfolio by addressing sustainable tourism, environmental economics, ethical communication, public governance, and technological innovation.

Overall, the distribution demonstrates that specialised sustainability education is strategically concentrated within disciplines where sustainability is fundamental to professional practice while remaining interdisciplinary in its institutional reach.

The analysis of sustainability-focused courses across academic levels indicates that specialised sustainability education is concentrated primarily at the bachelor's level, where students develop discipline-specific expertise alongside their foundational academic studies. This reflects the University's strategy of introducing specialised sustainability knowledge early within professional degree programmes.

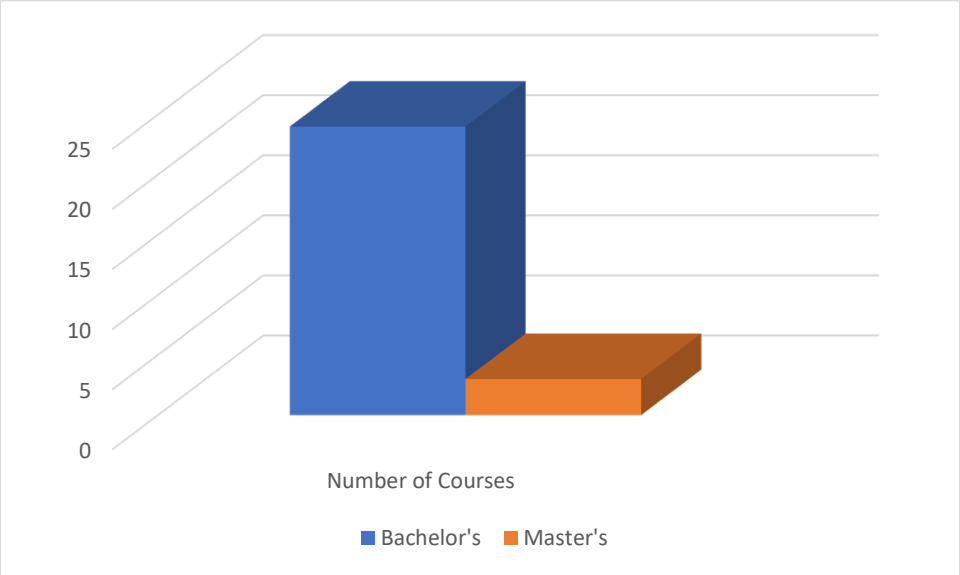



*Figure 6. Sustainability-Focused Courses by Academic Level*

Master's programmes provide complementary opportunities for advanced study through specialised courses that address emerging sustainability challenges within professional and interdisciplinary contexts. Although no sustainability-focused doctoral courses were identified through the curriculum mapping methodology, doctoral programmes contribute to sustainability through research-oriented education and the integration of sustainability themes within sustainability-inclusive courses and doctoral research activities.

This distribution illustrates the complementary roles of different academic levels: undergraduate programmes provide specialised disciplinary education, master's programmes deepen professional expertise, and doctoral education advances sustainability through research and knowledge creation.

The analysis of Sustainable Development Goal integration reveals that the University's sustainability-focused curriculum is characterised by a strong emphasis on environmental sustainability and climate resilience.

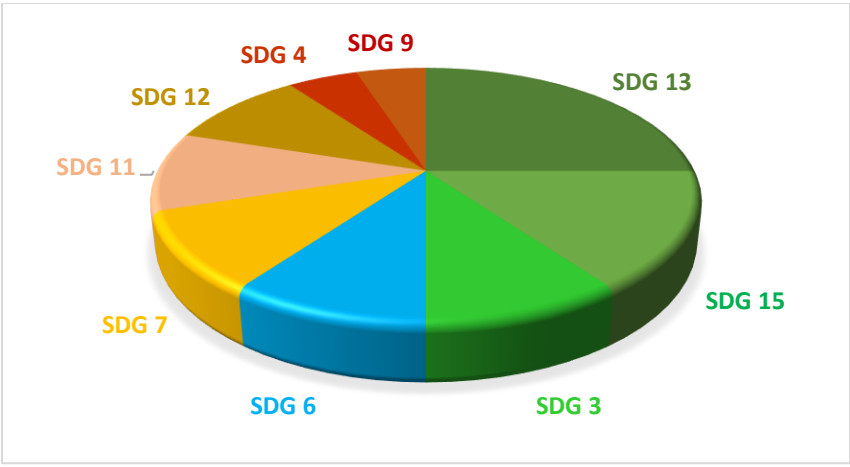



*Figure 7. Frequency of Sustainable Development Goal Integration Across Sustainability-Focused Courses (2025)*

SDG 13 (Climate Action) is the most frequently represented goal, reflecting the University's strategic commitment to addressing climate change through education in sustainable design, environmental governance, responsible business practices, and technological innovation. The prominence of climate action across multiple disciplines demonstrates that environmental sustainability has become a defining characteristic of the University's specialised sustainability education.

A second group of highly represented goals includes SDG 15 (Life on Land), SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). Together, these goals highlight the University's emphasis on biodiversity conservation, sustainable resource management, resilient urban development, and environmentally responsible production and consumption.

Additional representation of SDGs 3 (Good Health and Well-being), 4 (Quality Education), 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), and 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) demonstrates that sustainability-focused education extends beyond environmental protection to include public health, clean energy, educational development, and innovation-driven sustainability solutions.

While several social and governance-related SDGs appear less frequently within sustainability-focused courses, these themes are extensively incorporated throughout the University's sustainability-inclusive curriculum. Together, the two curriculum categories ensure balanced coverage of the environmental, economic, social, and institutional dimensions of sustainable development.

**Cross-Level Trends and Progress Since 2024**

The 2025 curriculum mapping confirms that sustainability is now systematically embedded across all academic levels at Caucasus University. While bachelor’s programmes continue to provide the broadest exposure to sustainability concepts through a diverse range of disciplines, master's programmes demonstrate the greatest thematic diversity, integrating sustainability into leadership, governance, innovation, business, education, law, and public policy. Doctoral programmes, although smaller in scale, maintain a strategic focus on research that advances sustainable economic growth, innovation, educational quality, and climate resilience.

Compared with 2024, the University has expanded both the breadth and depth of SDG integration within its curriculum. The number of sustainability-focused courses increased from 17 to 27, while sustainability-inclusive courses grew from 189 to 207, resulting in a total increase from 206 to 234 SDG-related courses. This progress demonstrates that sustainability is increasingly embedded throughout the University's educational ecosystem rather than concentrated within a limited number of programmes. The continued expansion of sustainability-related teaching reinforces Caucasus University's strategic commitment to equipping graduates with the interdisciplinary knowledge, practical competencies, and ethical perspectives needed to contribute effectively to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and to address contemporary environmental, social, economic, and governance challenges.

**Caucasus University Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center (IEC)**

The Caucasus University Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center (IEC) plays a central role in advancing the University's contribution to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by fostering entrepreneurship, innovation, technology commercialization, and collaboration between academia, industry, and society. Through its entrepreneurship support initiatives, the Center equips students and aspiring entrepreneurs with the knowledge, skills, and networks necessary to develop innovative solutions that address pressing economic, environmental, and social challenges.

Throughout 2025, the IEC further strengthened the University's entrepreneurial ecosystem through the successful implementation of the CUnicorn Startup Pre-Acceleration Program**,** the University's flagship entrepreneurship initiative. Delivered through two cohorts (Batch 5 and CUnicorn+), the intensive 10-week programme supported 17 startup teams comprising approximately 60 participants from diverse academic backgrounds. Combining entrepreneurship education, practical workshops, one-to-one mentoring, customer discovery, business model validation, and investor-oriented pitch preparation, the programme enabled participants to transform innovative ideas into market-ready business concepts while strengthening entrepreneurial, leadership, and problem-solving competencies.




*Figure X. Overview of the programme's scale, participation, and innovation outcomes, including the number of cohorts, startup teams, participants, innovation sectors, and Sustainable Development Goals addressed.*

The diversity of the participating startups demonstrates the multidisciplinary nature of innovation fostered at Caucasus University. The 2025 portfolio encompassed solutions in Artificial Intelligence, Green Technologies, AgriTech, EdTech, HealthTech, Cybersecurity, Smart Mobility,

Software-as-a-Service (SaaS), Digital Marketing, and Human Resource Technologies. These ventures addressed a wide range of sustainable development challenges, illustrating how entrepreneurship can generate practical solutions with both economic and societal value.

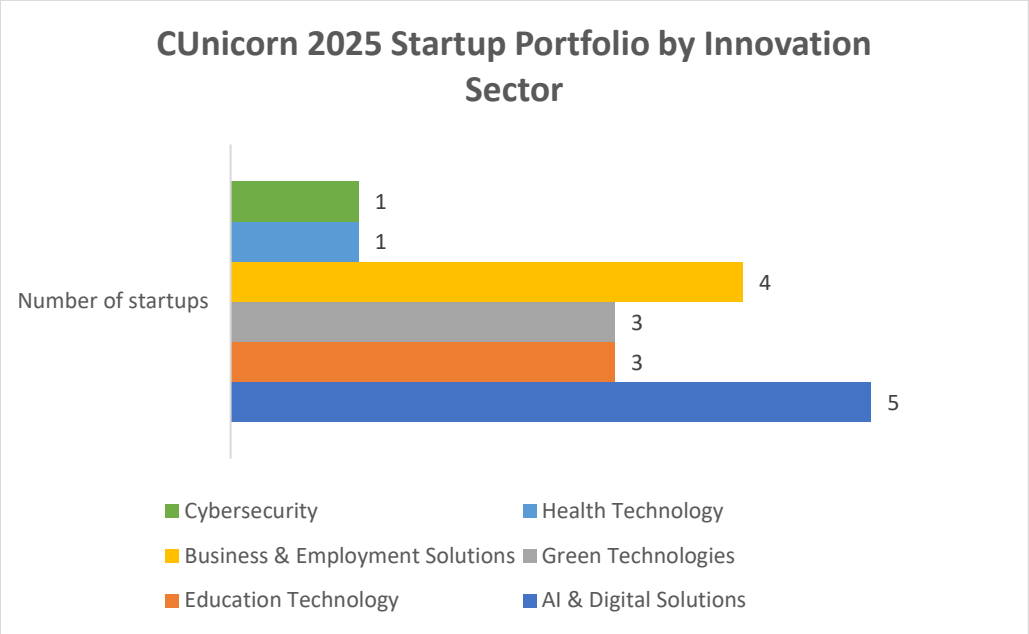



*Figure X. Distribution of startup teams across major innovation sectors, demonstrating the multidisciplinary nature of entrepreneurship and innovation supported by the Caucasus University Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center.*

The startup portfolio showed particularly strong representation in digital innovation and artificial intelligence, alongside projects promoting sustainable agriculture, clean energy, education, healthcare, employment, cybersecurity, and responsible resource management. This diversity reflects the University's commitment to nurturing innovation across multiple disciplines while encouraging students and early-stage entrepreneurs to develop solutions that respond to local and global sustainability needs.

The programme also demonstrated a strong contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals through the wide range of challenges addressed by participating startups. Collectively, the ventures contributed to 11 Sustainable Development Goals**,** with the strongest emphasis on SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure)**,** followed by SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities)**.** Additional contributions were made to SDGs 2, 3, 6, 7, 12, 13, and 16**,** highlighting the broad societal and environmental impact of entrepreneurship-driven innovation.

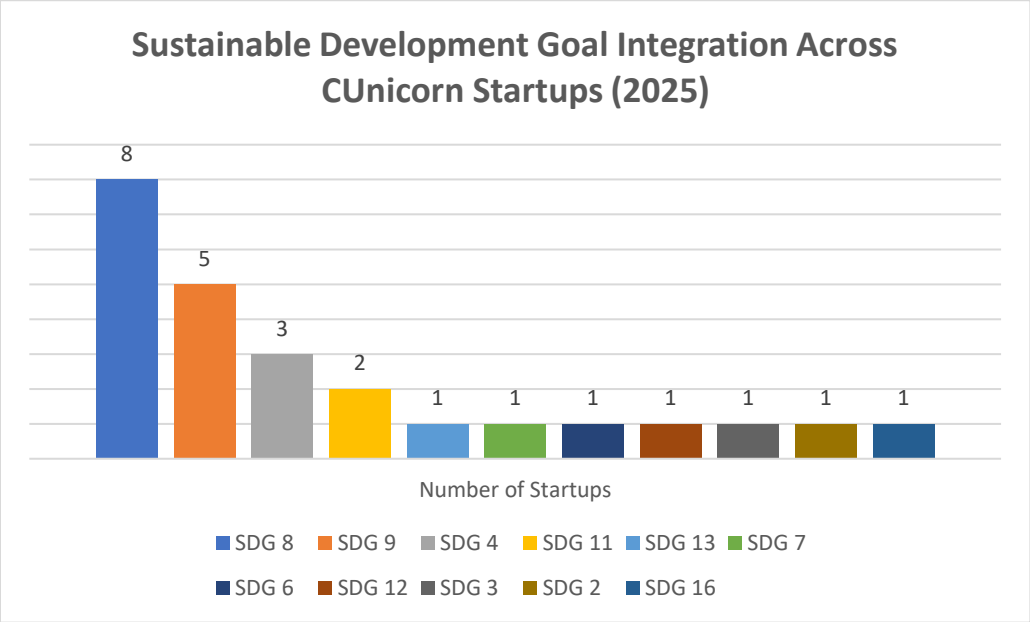



*Figure . Frequency of Sustainable Development Goals addressed by startups participating in the CUnicorn Startup Pre-Acceleration Program, illustrating the programme's contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.

By integrating entrepreneurship education with intensive mentoring, business development support, and cross-sector collaboration, the CUnicorn Startup Pre-Acceleration Program continued to position Caucasus University as an important contributor to Georgia's innovation ecosystem. Beyond supporting the creation of technology-based startups, the programme fostered solutions that promote sustainable economic growth, digital transformation, environmental stewardship, quality education, public health, and resilient communities. Through innovation-driven entrepreneurship, the University demonstrates how higher education institutions can contribute directly to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals while strengthening students' entrepreneurial competencies and supporting long-term sustainable development.

**Key Activities and Events in 2025**

The 10th Annual International Conference "Digital World Evolution and Sustainable Development Goals: Transformation of Industries and Professions for Sustainable Development," held on 7-8 November 2025 contributed to multiple SDGs through its interdisciplinary focus on digital transformation. The conference examined how digital technologies reshape education, governance, business, economy, media, architecture, law, and other professional domains, with direct relevance to SDG 4 (Quality Education) through discussions on educational innovation and digital learning; SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) through analysis of technological transformation across sectors; and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) by addressing the changing nature of professions and



labor markets. Governance and legal dimensions of digitalization aligned with SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), while the international participation of academic and industry representatives from Europe and Asia reflected SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). Across six thematic working sessions and contributions from over 30 participants, the conference strengthened evidence-based dialogue on the role of digitalization in advancing sustainable development outcomes.




Throughout 2025, representatives of Caucasus University actively participated in and hosted a series of capacity-building trainings and consortium activities within the Erasmus+ "Promoting High-Quality Digital Education in Georgia (PRODIGE)" project, aimed at strengthening the digital transformation of higher education in Georgia. The activities included introductory and advanced training sessions delivered by European partners such as Tallinn University of Technology and Haute École de Namur–Liège–Luxembourg, focusing on pedagogical innovation, gamification, interactive learning tools (e.g., Genially, Mentimeter, Padlet, Kahoot), digital course design, inclusive education, distance learning methodologies, and quality assurance in digital education. Additional sessions addressed AI integration, AR/VR, adaptive learning, digital quality frameworks, and institutional approaches to hybrid and blended learning, while also supporting staff development in digital pedagogy, including participation from academic and administrative personnel across faculties and units. The programme further included job shadowing, policy discussions, and the development of institutional outputs such as an exploitation plan to ensure the sustainability of project results within university systems. Consortium meetings and national roundtables brought together Georgian universities, European experts, and international partners under the coordination of EFMD, with participation from institutions in Estonia, Spain, Croatia, Luxembourg, and Belgium.

From January to December 2025, Caucasus University actively engaged in the Erasmus+ CBHE ENRICHER Hubs project "Designing Green Tourism Concepts Through Learning," implementing a series of international mobility activities, trainings, workshops, and stakeholder events aimed at advancing sustainable tourism education and practice. The activities included staff visits to Comrat State University in Moldova, where participants applied service design and design sprint methodologies in real tourism settings such as "Gagauz Safrasi" and Comrat Winery, as well as multiple capacity-building trainings at Caucasus University on sustainable tourism principles, service design fundamentals, gamification, and innovative pedagogical approaches. A key milestone of the project was the official opening of the Green Tourism Hub on 30 September 2025 at Caucasus University, inaugurated with the



participation of university leadership and international partners from Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences. The Hub provides an innovative, technology-enhanced environment designed to support knowledge exchange, best practice sharing, and the practical application of service design methods in sustainable tourism, while strengthening collaboration between academia, industry stakeholders, and students. Alongside the Hub's establishment, student workshops, business challenges, and stakeholder seminars were implemented, enabling participants to analyze real tourism cases, develop prototypes, and explore sustainability indicators in alignment with SDG frameworks.

From February to October 2025, staff members of Caucasus University actively participated in and led a series of capacity-building trainings, certification courses, information sessions, and consortium meetings within the Erasmus+ funded ETHICS project ("Responsible Conduct of Research – Research Integrity and Ethics in Georgian Universities"), aimed at strengthening research ethics and academic integrity across Georgian higher education institutions. Academic and administrative staff from the university were directly involved as trainers, session leaders, and contributors to the development and delivery of key modules covering research ethics frameworks, codes of conduct, publication ethics, functioning of ethics committees, prevention of academic misconduct, and responsible use of artificial intelligence in research and scholarly communication. The university also engaged in national dissemination activities and international consortium meetings with European and Georgian partner institutions, contributing to the development of shared standards and institutional mechanisms for ethical research governance.

***CU SUPPORTING CULTURAL AND SPORT LIFE***

Caucasus University's cultural, educational, and sports initiatives contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by promoting good health and well-being (SDG 3), quality education (SDG 4), reduced inequalities (SDG 10), and peaceful, inclusive communities (SDG 16). Through international study visits, cultural events, annual university traditions, and sports championships, CU fosters student engagement, intercultural exchange, lifelong learning, and healthy lifestyles while strengthening students' academic, professional, and social development.



In 2025, Caucasus University organized an educational study tour to Abu Dhabi and Dubai, providing students with an opportunity to participate in the training "Negotiating Startup Funding." During the visit, students met with startup founders, explored the Future Foundation and the in Innovation Center, and visited internationally renowned landmarks. The study tour enhanced students' entrepreneurial knowledge, negotiation skills, and understanding of global innovation ecosystems while promoting international exposure and experiential learning.

The Caucasus University Theatre participated in the "Mask" Festival, which provided CU students with an opportunity to showcase their artistic talents, contribute to the promotion of Georgian cultural heritage, and engage with broader cultural audiences.

As part of its annual tradition, Caucasus University celebrated Georgian Language Day**,** an event dedicated to promoting the Georgian language and cultural heritage. The initiative brought

together students, faculty, and members of the wider community, reinforcing the importance of preserving national identity while encouraging cultural awareness and participation.

During the 2025 Spring Semester, Caucasus University organized a series of annual sports championships designed to encourage physical activity, teamwork, and student engagement. These included the CU Arm Wrestling Championship, organized in cooperation with the Georgian Arm Wrestling Federation, featuring competitions in the 70 kg, 80 kg, and 80+ kg categories for both left and right hand. The CU Chess Championship, organized in partnership with the Georgian Chess Federation, brought together both students and university staff. The university also hosted the Valeri Telia Memorial Backgammon Championship, supported by the Georgian Sports Backgammon Federation, providing students and employees with an opportunity to compete in a traditional intellectual sport.





In collaboration with the Georgian Basketball Federation, Caucasus University organized its annual Basketball Championship at the Academy Basketball Club arena, offering students the opportunity to compete in a structured sporting environment. The university also held its annual Table Tennis Championship on the CU campus with the support of the Tbilisi Table Tennis Federation, further promoting active participation in sports and healthy lifestyles among students.

Through these initiatives, Caucasus University continues to cultivate an inclusive campus environment that promotes academic excellence, cultural enrichment, international engagement, entrepreneurship, and physical well-being. Collectively, these activities reinforce the university's commitment to holistic student development while contributing directly to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

***CONTRIBUTION TO CLIMATE ACTION AND BIODIVERSITY THROUGH CAMPUS GREENING***



Caucasus University actively supports climate action and urban biodiversity through the purposeful landscaping of its campus, which hosts a diverse range of trees, shrubs, and vines known for their environmental benefits, including carbon dioxide ($CO_2$) absorption, air purification, and habitat creation.

Currently, the university yard includes large variety of species that contribute meaningfully to reducing the university's carbon footprint by capturing and

storing atmospheric $CO_2$ throughout their life cycle. In total, the greenery at CU absorbs approximately 3,214 kilograms of $CO_2$ annually.

Each plant plays a role based on its characteristics:

- Large trees such as oaks, spruce, poplar, and pine serve as major carbon sinks, with individual trees absorbing 20–50 kg of $CO_2$ annually as they mature.
- Medium-sized trees and shrubs like thuja, acacia, photinia, and pyracantha contribute additional carbon capture while enhancing the green aesthetics and ecological resilience of the space.
- Vines like ivy and wisteria contribute to vertical greening, improving microclimates and air quality on campus walls and structures.
- Flowering plants such as roses and crepe-myrtles support pollinator biodiversity while also modestly absorbing $CO_2$.

In addition to these efforts, campus renovations have been aligned with energy-efficiency and environmental standards**:**

- The renovation of the Batumi campus was funded in part by a co-financing resource from the EBRD's energy-efficiency project funding line**.** The project proposal, which included both the façade and engineering systems**,** was reviewed and approved due to its full compliance with energy-efficiency principles.
- Similarly, the Ortachala campus features energy-efficient glazing and a façade designed to minimize energy loss**,** further reducing the environmental impact of university facilities.

The university also implements sustainable operational practices:

- CU actively reduces paper consumption-all contracts with staff, lecturers, and students are fully digitized, minimizing the need for printed documents.
- In terms of paper recycling, the university collects approximately 1.5 tons of wastepaper and recycles it every three years.
- The university also invests in energy-efficient lighting, purchasing energy-saving bulbs at the start of each academic semester and replenishing stock as needed to ensure that lighting systems remain sustainable and efficient.

Overall, the strategic planting and maintenance of this diverse green infrastructure contribute directly to:

- Mitigating climate change impacts by sequestering carbon dioxide (SDG 13),
- Enhancing urban biodiversity and ecosystem services (SDG 15),

- Promoting a healthier, more sustainable urban environment for students, staff, and visitors (SDG 11).



The integration of diverse native and adaptive plant species not only beautifies the CU campus but also symbolizes the University's broader commitment to environmental responsibility and sustainable development.

- Science Lecture “Sustainable Finance” - Panel Discussion
- SDG Innovation Accelerator for Young Professionals
- Harvard University’s Division of Continuing Education and Caucasus University, in collaboration with UN Women Georgia, Launch a Unique Executive Leadership Program
- Public Lecture - Geopolitics of Renewable Energy
- Caucasus University Has Joined the Transform4Europe European Universities Alliance
- PRODIGE project, a training titled "Adapting the Structures and Organizational Behavior for Digital Education – Organizing Technical and Support Services" was conducted
- Training on Digital Education Potential for Inclusion and Lifelong Learning
- Caucasus University Personnel Participated in PRODIGE Training – Gamification and Interactive Learning as Innovative Approaches to Digital Education




(+995 32) 2 37 77 77 |info@cu.edu.ge| Paata Saakadze street №, Tbilisi 0102, Georgia