# 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Sustainable Development Goal 8

# Progress Report 2025

## Afrasiab University

(formerly the Institute of Social and Political Sciences, ISFI)

Non-state higher education institution, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

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| **Reporting period** | 1 January – 31 December 2025 |
| **Website** | afrasiabedu.uz |

This report presents the progress of Afrasiab University towards SDG 8 during 2025. In 2025 the institution operated under its former name, the Institute of Social and Political Sciences (ISFI); activities and evidence from that period therefore show the former name.

# 1. Introduction

Afrasiab University (formerly the Institute of Social and Political Sciences, ISFI) is a non-state higher education institution in Tashkent, licensed in December 2022. As an employer and as an educator of future professionals, the university is committed to Sustainable Development Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

This report summarises the university's progress towards SDG 8 between January and December 2025. It covers the employment policies that protect the rights of all staff, the activities that prepare students for the labour market, staff well-being and team culture, and international partnerships that create professional development opportunities for staff. It closes with the university's priorities for further development.

# 2. Highlights of 2025

| Area | What the university did in 2025 |
|---|---|
| Decent work policies | Internal Labour Regulations, Code of Conduct and standard employment contract, all reviewed and approved on 2–5 September 2025 |
| Labour rights | Trade union committee recognised in working-time decisions; rights apply equally to all staff, including foreign citizens and stateless persons |
| Forced and child labour | Employer obliged to prevent forced labour and the worst forms of child labour (employment contract, Clause 10.14) |
| Graduate employability | Participation of students and graduates in the Career Forum and job fair with major employers |
| Digital skills | Programming and computer literacy courses (from October 2025), led by the head of the institute's Digital Technologies Centre |
| Staff well-being | "Secret Santa – 2025" gift exchange and "Zakovat" intellectual game for staff |
| Staff development | Agreements with Michigan State University (USA), UNJANI (Indonesia) and UPSI (Malaysia) on staff mobility, internships and training from 2026 |

# 3. Decent work policies

The university's employment practice is governed by three documents: the Internal Labour Regulations (approved by the Rector on 5 September 2025), the Code of Conduct (approved by the Institute Council on 5 September 2025) and the standard employment contract concluded with every employee. All are based on the Labour Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

| Commitment | Provision |
|---|---|
| Rights for all staff | The Internal Labour Regulations apply to all employees, including citizens of Uzbekistan, foreign citizens and stateless persons (Clause 1) |
| Trade union recognition | Working-time arrangements are decided by the Rector in agreement with the trade union committee (Clause 28); labour disputes are resolved with the participation of the institute's trade union (employment contract, Clause 13.1) |
| Non-discrimination | No person may be disparaged or discriminated against on the basis of gender, race, nationality, language, religious belief, social origin, position or other characteristics (Code of Conduct, Art. 26); managers must not allow discrimination in labour relations (Art. 17) |
| Fair recruitment | Written reasons must be given for any refusal of employment, with the right of appeal to court (Clause 12) |
| Dignity and harassment | Actions degrading an employee's honour and dignity are prohibited (Clause 16); harassment of women is gross misconduct (Clause 25g) |
| Forced and child labour | The employer must prevent the use of forced labour and the worst forms of child labour (employment contract, Clause 10.14); only persons of legal working age may be employed (Clause 1) |
| Right of appeal | Every employee may apply to the employer if they consider their rights violated, and is informed of the outcome (Clause 83); disciplinary sanctions may be appealed (Clause 68) |
| Decent working conditions | Wages paid on time and in full, safe working conditions, annual leave, and a 5-day, 40-hour working week (employment contract, Clauses 10.4–10.15) |

All core support services, including cleaning, security and facilities, are delivered by staff employed directly by the university under standard employment contracts, so that every worker on campus enjoys the same rights and protections.

# 4. Preparing students for decent work

## 4.1 Career Forum and job fair

Following the instructions given at the meeting chaired by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on 8 August 2025 on helping students and graduates enter the labour market, a job fair and Career Forum was held in 2025 with major employers. It was organised with the Tashkent City Administration, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Agency for Youth Affairs and MDIS Tashkent. The institute's delegation, led by Elyor Parpi-Aliyev, Head of the Academic Affairs Department, took part together with students. Participants met employers directly, explored job opportunities in their fields and learned about current labour market trends.




*The institute's delegation at the Career Forum, 2025.*




*Students and staff at the Career Forum, 2025.*

## 4.2 Digital skills for employment



*Programming and computer literacy class, 2025.*

From October 2025, the university runs programming and computer literacy courses to equip students and members of the public with practical, employable digital skills. The courses cover office software (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Canva), programming in Python and C++, project development and working with artificial intelligence.

The courses are taught by Fayzulloxon Musayev, head of the institute's Digital Technologies Centre, who gained international experience through internships in Malaysia and Kazakhstan. The course aims to give learners practical rather than purely theoretical knowledge: "Learn today — create your own programme tomorrow."

# 5. Staff well-being and team culture

A positive working environment is part of decent work. In 2025 the university organised activities that strengthened team spirit and mutual respect among staff.

## 5.1 “Secret Santa – 2025”

In December 2025, ahead of the New Year holiday, the university held a “Secret Santa – 2025” gift exchange for staff. Each participant drew the name of a colleague at random and prepared a secret New Year gift for them. The event strengthened a friendly atmosphere in the team and gave staff an opportunity to show appreciation for one another.



*“Secret Santa – 2025” draw among staff, December 2025.*



*Staff at the New Year gift exchange, December 2025.*

## 5.2 “Zakovat” intellectual game for staff

In 2025 the institute organised a “Zakovat” intellectual game for staff, in which teams competed on knowledge, quick thinking and teamwork.




*“Zakovat” intellectual game for staff, 2025.*

# 6. Professional development through international partnerships

In 2025 the university agreed new international partnerships that will give faculty and staff opportunities for professional development, internships and mobility from 2026:

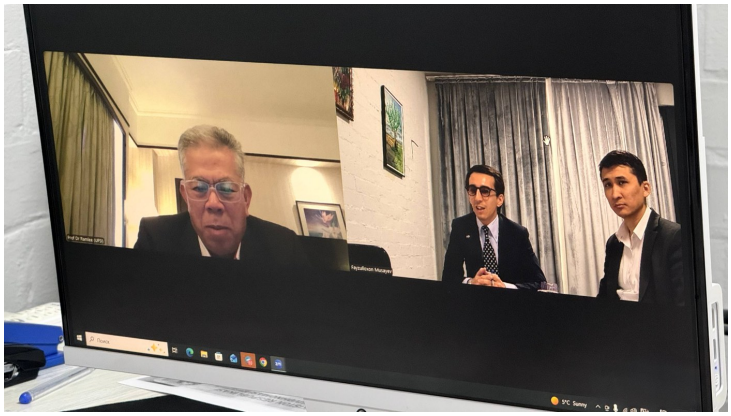
| Date | Partner | Agreed areas of cooperation |
|---|---|---|
| 14 November 2025 | Michigan State University (USA) – Prof. Douglas K. Hartman, Editor-in-Chief of Language Learning and Technology | Joint research by faculty, joint academic and teaching publications, student mobility, joint seminars, workshops, webinars and conferences |
| 3 December 2025 | Universitas Jenderal Achmad Yani (UNJANI), Indonesia – Memorandum of Understanding signed | Academic mobility, short- and long-term internships and professional development courses for faculty, joint research grants and joint programmes |
| 2025 | Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI), Malaysia – online meeting | Multidisciplinary projects, joint programmes, student exchange, joint research and professional development |




*Meeting with Prof. Douglas K. Hartman, Michigan State University, 14 November 2025.*




*Negotiations with the leadership of UNJANI (Indonesia), 3 December 2025.*



*Online meeting with Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (Malaysia), 2025.*

# 7. Priorities for development

Building on 2025, the university has identified the following priorities for strengthening its contribution to SDG 8:

| Priority | Planned action |
|---|---|
| Pay equity | Adopt a pay equity policy and carry out an annual analysis of pay by gender and position |
| Collective agreement | Conclude a collective agreement with the university trade union |
| Fair labour standards for contractors | Set out labour standards for any future contractors and suppliers, including the prohibition of forced and child labour |
| Work placements | Systematically record student work placements and their duration, and expand partnerships with employers |
| Graduate employment | Track graduate employment outcomes and hold an annual career day on campus |
| Staff development | Implement the staff mobility and internship programmes agreed with international partners |

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