

## SDG 8. Decent work and economic growth

Urgench State University (UrSU) is a key driver of **Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8)** in the Khorezm region. As one of Uzbekistan's largest regional universities with over **25,000 students**, it serves as a bridge between academic education and the local labor market.

### 1. Employment and Career Development

UrSU actively manages the transition from study to work through its **Career Development Center** and large-scale recruitment events.

- **TalabaExpo:** The university hosts annual career exhibitions (such as **TalabaExpo-2025**) involving over **130 major employers** offering more than **1,300 job vacancies**.
- **Direct Hiring:** Specific faculties, like Chemical Technologies, maintain partnerships with regional giants such as **UzAutoMotors**, **Gurlan Global Tek**s, and **Urgench Cluster Group**. In recent sessions, dozens of graduates were hired "on the spot" via signed employment contracts.
- **Internship Agreements:** The university has official cooperation agreements with regional branches of **Hamkorbank** and the **People's Bank**, ensuring students gain professional financial experience before graduation.

### 2. Supporting Innovation and Entrepreneurship

To foster a culture of self-employment and "StartUp" culture, UrSU provides platforms for student-led business ideas:

- **Startup Competitions:** The university organizes contests like "**First Step to Women's Business**" to specifically support female scientists and students in securing funding for their business models.
- **Key Focus Areas:** Current university-backed startup projects focus on **tourism technology** (reviving historical culture through VR/AR) and **agricultural clusters** (modernizing food production for export-oriented jams and candies).
- **Business Incubator:** UrSU integrates with regional innovation hubs to provide students with co-working spaces and mentorship for developing business plans.

### 3. Impact on Regional Economic Growth

UrSU doesn't just teach; it conducts research that directly influences the Khorezm economy:

- **Tourism Development:** The Faculty of Tourism and Economics conducts practical research on maximizing the tourist potential of **Khiva** and the Aral Sea region.
- **Agricultural Modernization:** Through international projects (like **Erasmus+ ECAMPUZ**), the university introduces modern technologies in fruit and vegetable processing, helping local farmers increase their income and sustainability.
- **Rural Livelihoods:** The university's mission includes "poverty alleviation" by providing agricultural support services and promoting small-scale private agro-businesses in rural areas.

## 4. Fair Work and Staff Well-being

Within its own walls, UrSU serves as an example of a "Decent Work" environment:

- **Labor Protection:** The university has a dedicated **Trade Union Committee** and a Department of Labor Protection and Safety.
- **Safety Standards:** UrSU regularly hosts roundtables on the "**World Day for Safety and Health at Work**" to ensure all staff and faculty work in environments that meet international safety standards.
- **Equality:** The university adheres to the national Labor Code, which strictly prohibits discrimination and ensures equal pay for equal work among its **1,000+ employees**.

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