BAU BAHÇEŞEHİR UNIVERSITY

SDG 11: SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



2024-2025

BAU AT A GLANCE

Since its foundation in 1998, the vision of BAU has been to be a global university known for its contribution to scientific, technological, and cultural knowledge through innovative education models and research approaches that reflect international standards as well as service to society. Currently, BAU Global Network comprises of 5 universities (Istanbul, Washington D.C., Berlin, Cyprus, Batumi), 5 liaison offices (BAU Global Azerbaijan Jordan, Uzbekistan, Mongolia, Pakistan) and 5 language schools.

Bahçeşehir University (BAU) is committed to advancing the wellbeing of local and global communities by integrating the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into its institutional governance, operations, organisational culture, educational programmes, academic research and stakeholder partnerships. Through this integrated approach, BAU seeks to align its academic mission and institutional practices with sustainable development priorities and contribute to positive societal change.

Bringing together staff, students and alumni, BAU promotes a university community guided by ethical conduct, social responsibility and global citizenship. The University encourages its members to recognise their responsibilities towards one another, wider society and the environment, and to apply their knowledge and skills to building a more inclusive, equitable and sustainable future.

BAU IN THE TIMES HIGHER EDUCATION

BAU participates in the Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings since 2019. According to the current rankings, BAU belongs to the 1000-12000 band in the World University Rankings, 59th in the Impact Rankings and the 251-300 in the Asia University Rankings 2026. Also, BAU is ranked as the top university in Türkiye.

The university continuously increases its standing in categories related to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. As of 2026, BAU holds the following standings in the THE Impact Rankings;

- 2nd in Gender Equality
- 6 th in Quality Education
- 77 th in Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
- 89 th in Partnership for the Goals
- Ranks between 101-200 in Reducing Inequalities
- Ranks between 201-300 in Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

The University takes the above-mentioned rankings as evaluation criteria for progress regarding its adherence and contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and will continue to report its advancement in the rankings on a yearly basis.

Sustainable Urban Development and Community Resilience at Bahçeşehir University

Bahçeşehir University (BAU), guided by its commitment to sustainable development and urban resilience, integrates the principles of Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11) across education, research, and institutional operations. The university's multidisciplinary approach—spanning architecture, design, governance, technology, and the arts—ensures that sustainability is not only an environmental objective but also a cultural, social, and civic responsibility.

BAU's Faculty of Architecture and Design plays a central role in advancing this vision by focusing on disaster-resilient, environmentally conscious, and inclusive urban systems. Through its academic programs and international collaborations, the Faculty develops innovative approaches to sustainable city planning, post-disaster reconstruction, and the integration of green technologies into architectural design. Projects such as the Urban Reconstruction of the Old Town of Antakya, carried out in collaboration with Mukogawa Women's University and supported by the Agency for Cultural Affairs of Japan, exemplify this commitment. These initiatives contribute to preserving cultural and historical heritage while developing adaptive strategies that reduce the adverse effects of natural disasters and enhance community resilience.

Within the same framework, the Local Governance Academy and the Local Advocacy School, organized by the Government Leadership School (HLO) and the Center for Migration and Urban Studies (BAUMUS), provide capacity-building programs for local administrators, policymakers, and municipal leaders. These initiatives strengthen participatory governance, improve strategic planning, and encourage data-driven policy development. By fostering cooperation between academia, public institutions, and civil society, they create inclusive platforms that empower local authorities to build sustainable, equitable, and resilient cities across Türkiye.

Institutionally, Bahçeşehir University reinforces its sustainability commitment through tangible practices such as the successful implementation of the Zero Waste Management System across all campuses, resulting in the university's certification at the Basic Level of Zero Waste by the Turkish Environment Agency. This achievement reflects the collective effort of BAU's administrative and academic units to reduce environmental impact, promote responsible consumption, and cultivate sustainable campus operations that model environmentally conscious behavior for the broader community.

In the field of technological innovation and sustainable agriculture, BAU also contributes to national dialogues on integrating artificial intelligence into rural development through platforms such as the National Policy Forum on Artificial Intelligence and Technology in Hazelnut Farming, held in cooperation with public and regional stakeholders. These collaborations demonstrate how digital transformation can enhance both urban and rural resilience, bridging the gap between smart technologies and sustainable production systems.

Complementing these efforts, the BAU Conservatory supports SDG 11 through its commitment to protecting and promoting cultural heritage. By fostering dialogue between traditional and contemporary music practices, the Conservatory serves as a bridge between local identity and global creativity, preserving intangible cultural assets for future generations.

Through its diverse academic, research, and institutional initiatives, Bahçeşehir University continues to contribute to the development of inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable communities. By uniting urban innovation, governance, education, and cultural preservation, BAU not only strengthens the foundations of sustainable city life but also reaffirms its role as a leading higher education institution shaping the future of sustainable urban transformation.

Bahçeşehir University Zero Waste Certifications

The Zero Waste Executive Board at Bahçeşehir University successfully coordinated the preparation and submission of reports required by the Environmental Agency, as well as the organization of on-site inspections and technical visits. Through structured collaboration between campus managers, administrative units, and support services, all required processes were completed efficiently and in line with national sustainability standards.

The initiative covered all university buildings and campuses where educational activities take place. Each site was registered in the Environmental Information System, administrative supervisors were authorized within the platform, and zero waste certification applications were submitted for all locations. Ahead of inspections, all necessary preparations were finalized, materials were supplied, and deficiencies were resolved in accordance with the audit feedback. In addition, academic and administrative staff received dedicated Zero Waste Training, and an instructional video was produced and shared on the university's digital learning platform.

As a result of these efforts, a total of ten Zero Waste Certificates have been granted to Bahçeşehir University, covering all campuses and buildings where educational activities are carried out. The process not only enhanced the university's waste management capacity but also reinforced its institutional culture of environmental responsibility and cross-departmental collaboration. These actions have also contributed to more efficient use of natural resources, including the responsible management of water throughout campus operations—strengthening the University's holistic approach to sustainability.

Link: https://aday.bau.edu.tr/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Sifir_atik_belgeleri.pdf

Evrak Tarih ve Sayısı: 10.08.2023-E.63534

T.C.
BAHÇEŞEHİR ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ
Mekan ve Donatım Birimi

Sayı : E-36229606-812-63534
Konu : Sıfır Atık Belgeleri Hk.

GENEL SEKRETERLİK MAKAMINA

Sıfır Atık Yürütme Kurulu olarak, Çevre Ajansının istemiş olduğu raporların hazırlanması, sunulması ve üniversitemizde gerçekleştirilen teknik gezi için mekanların hazırlanması işleri iş bölümü ile başarılı bir şekilde gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Ayrıca;

- Üniversitemiz eğitim faaliyeti bulunan tüm farklı adreslerdeki binaları için EÇBS sistemine girişleri yapılmış, İdari amirler sistem üzerinde yetkilendirilmiş,
- Girişi yapılan tüm adresler için Sıfır Atık Belge Başvurusunda bulunulmuş,
- Belge başvurusu denetlemeleri öncesinde sıfır atıkla ilgili tüm hazırlıklar yürütülmüş, eksik malzemeler tespit ve tedarik edilmiş,
- Denetleme sonrasında talep edilen düzeltmeler/değişiklikler/eksiklerin giderilmesi işlemleri takip edilmiş ve sonuçlandırılmış,
- Akademik ve idari personele Sıfır Atık Eğitimi verilmiş, eğitimle ilgili video hazırlanmış ve itslearning alanına yüklenmiş,
- Kurum içi yazışmalar yürütülmüş, dış hizmetler için bilgilendirme mailleri hazırlanmış ve muhataplarına gönderilmiştir.

Üniversitemizin tüm kampüs ve binalarına Temel Seviyede Sıfır Atık Belgesi başarıyla alınmıştır. Yürütme Kurulumuz tüm bu süreçlerden kampüslerin yöneticileri başta olmak üzere, Destek Hizmetleri Daire Başkanlığına bağlı İdari amirler ve onların aracılığıyla da idari personellerden destek almıştır.

Sıfır Atık Belgesi alınmış kampüs ve kapsadığı bloklar ile belgenin no ve tarih bilgileri aşağıda listelenmiştir. Sıfır Atık Belgeleri ayrıca ekte sunulmuştur.

S.No	Kampüsler	Kapsadığı Bloklar	Sıfır Atık Belge No	Verildiği Tarih	Son Geçerlilik Tarihi
1	Balmumcu Kampüs	Ana Blok	TS/34/B2/6/5795	07.07.2023	5.07.2028
2	Galata Kampüs	Ana Blok	TS/34/B2/6/58112	07.07.2023	12.07.2028
3	Göztepe Kampüs	A ve B Blok	TS/34/B2/6/57424	04.04.2023	24.04.2028
4	Güney Kampüs	A, B, C, D, G, N, O	TS/34/B2/6/5783	07.07.2023	3.07.2028
5	Güney Kampüs	F Blok - Hukuk Fakültesi Binası	TS/34/B2/6/58418	07.07.2023	18.07.2028
6	Güney Kampüs	Uzaktan Eğitim Binası	TS/34/B2/6/5805	07.07.2023	5.07.2028
7	Galata Kampüs	İdea Binası	TS/34/B3/6/18824	07.07.2023	24.07.2028
8	Kemerburgaz Kampüs	Tüm Bloklar, Girişimcilik Merkezi, Yurtlar ve Misafirhane Bloğu	TS/34/B2/6/5879	08.2023	9.08.2028
9	Kuzey Kampüs	A,B ve C Blok	TS/34/B2/6/57321	03.2023	21.03.2028
10	Pera Kampüs	Ana Blok	TS/34/B2/6/58524	07.2023	24.07.2028

Bilgilerinize arz ederim.

Saygılarımla.

Ali UÇAR
Daire Başkanı Vekili

Ek:Tüm Kampüsler Sıfır Atık Belgeleri (10 adet)

Bu belge, güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır.
Belge Doğrulama Kodu: B5R4Y9PUMC — Belge Takip Adresi : https://www.turkiye.gov.tr/bahcesehir-universitesi-ebys
Çırağan Caddesi Osmanpaşa Mektebi Sokak No: 4 - 6, 34353 Beşiktaş İstanbul — Bilgi için: Yeşim YILDIZ, Birim Yöneticisi
İnternet Adresi: www.bahcesehir.edu.tr
Kep Adresi: bahcesehiruniversitesi@hs01.kep.tr

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BAU Activities and Initiatives Supporting SDG11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

National Policy Forum on Artificial Intelligence and Technology in Hazelnut Farming (December 2024)



The National Policy Forum on Artificial Intelligence and Technology in Hazelnut Farming, held in Giresun in December 2024, was organized under the coordination of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Giresun Governorship, with the support of Bahçeşehir University (BAU), Giresun University, the Eastern Black Sea Development Agency (DOKA), and several other public, academic, and private sector stakeholders.

The forum brought together government representatives, universities, research institutions, industry leaders, and farmer organizations to develop a national roadmap for integrating artificial intelligence (AI) and digital technologies into Türkiye's agricultural production systems, particularly in the hazelnut sector, which plays a strategic role in the country's economy.

Bahçeşehir University contributed to the forum through its expertise in AI applications, sustainable food systems, and policy research, supporting the formulation of data-driven agricultural strategies, evidence-based policy recommendations, and innovation-oriented frameworks.

By connecting national and local institutions, the initiative promotes the digital transformation of agriculture and strengthens Türkiye's commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—especially SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure), and SDG 13 (Climate Action)—advancing inclusive, climate-smart, and technology-driven agricultural development.

The initiative also contributes to SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) by supporting the long-term sustainability and resilience of rural communities whose livelihoods, local economies, and social structures are closely connected to agricultural production. In hazelnut-producing regions such as Giresun, the integration of artificial intelligence and digital technologies into agriculture offers opportunities to strengthen local production systems, improve access to agricultural knowledge, and support the economic viability of rural communities. By bringing together national and local authorities, universities, industry representatives, and farmer organisations to develop a shared agricultural technology roadmap, the forum is particularly relevant to SDG Target 11.a, which promotes stronger economic, social, and environmental links between urban, peri-urban, and rural areas through integrated national and regional development planning. The initiative thus highlights how innovation-oriented agricultural policies can contribute not only to more sustainable food production but also to the preservation of rural livelihoods, the resilience of local communities, and more balanced regional development.



2nd International UTAD Theatre Research Conference: Existence, Tradition and Future



During the 2024-2025 academic year, supported by TÜBİTAK and hosted by Bahçeşehir University Conservatory, the 2nd International UTAD Theatre Studies Conference brought together more than 120 scholars and artists from Türkiye and nine other countries. Organised under the theme "Existence, Tradition, and Future," the conference included academic presentations, acting and performing arts workshops, panel discussions and live performances. Through this comprehensive programme, Bahçeşehir University provided an international platform where academic research and artistic practice could interact, strengthening the production, transmission and public visibility of knowledge concerning theatre and the performing arts.

The programme addressed a broad range of subjects, including microdrama and climate activism, intercultural theatre, neuroscience and acting, and the historical development of Turkish theatre. By connecting theatre's historical traditions with contemporary research and emerging forms of performance, the conference examined how artistic practices can remain meaningful and responsive to new social, cultural and environmental challenges.

The conference contributed directly to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by supporting the preservation and continuation of intangible cultural heritage. Theatre carries collective memory, cultural identity, language, performance traditions and shared social experiences across generations. Through scholarly documentation, practical workshops, performances and intercultural dialogue, Bahçeşehir University helped safeguard this living heritage while creating opportunities for it to be reinterpreted and transmitted to future generations. The event also supported SDG 4: Quality Education through research-based artistic learning, SDG 13: Climate Action through its engagement with climate activism in theatre, and SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals through international academic and creative exchange.





Children's Conservatory Certificate Program

The BAU Conservatory & Part-Time Children's Conservatory Music Education Certificate Programme that took place during the 2024-2025 academic year, brings Bahçeşehir University's academic expertise in music education together with emerging young talent. Open to students currently attending the fifth grade, the selection process offers children an opportunity to begin structured musical education under the guidance of BAU's professional academic staff. The programme develops musical knowledge and performance skills while fostering creativity, artistic expression and a lasting engagement with the arts.

Through this programme, Bahçeşehir University contributes to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by supporting the continuation of music as a form of living cultural heritage. Introducing younger generations to musical knowledge, practices and traditions helps preserve cultural memory and ensures that artistic heritage is learned, interpreted and carried into the future. The programme also advances SDG 4: Quality Education by providing specialised arts education that supports children's creative, cultural and personal development.



Epic Theatre in Türkiye

Bahçeşehir University Conservatory opened the 2024-2025 academic year with a masterclass delivered by distinguished theatre artist Rutkay Aziz. In his inaugural lecture, “Epic Theatre in Türkiye,” Aziz introduced students to the historical development, artistic techniques and cultural significance of epic theatre within the Turkish context. By bringing an experienced practitioner into the academic environment, BAU connected formal conservatory education with professional knowledge and the lived history of the performing arts.

The masterclass contributed to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by supporting the documentation, interpretation and intergenerational transmission of Türkiye’s theatrical heritage. Through direct engagement with a leading artist, students gained insight into the artistic practices and cultural narratives that form part of the country’s living cultural memory. The event also supported SDG 4: Quality Education by enriching conservatory education through practice-based learning and specialist artistic expertise.





Annual Akbank Jazz Festival: JAmZZ Masterclass

As part of the 34th Akbank Jazz Festival, the JAmZZ Masterclass was held at BAU Pera Stage through the collaboration of Bahçeşehir University Conservatory and Zuhal Music. Guided by faculty members from BAU Conservatory and BAUJAZZ Academy, the programme brought talented emerging musicians together with experienced music educators for intensive artistic development, professional feedback and performance-oriented learning.

The masterclass contributed to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by strengthening Istanbul's cultural life and supporting jazz as a dynamic form of living musical heritage. Through BAU Pera Stage and the expertise of its Conservatory and Jazz Academy, Bahçeşehir University created a space where artistic knowledge could be transmitted to a new generation and emerging musicians could participate actively in the city's cultural ecosystem. The programme also advanced SDG 4: Quality Education through specialist music training and SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals through cooperation among the University, Akbank Jazz Festival and Zuhal Music.

https://www.akbanksanat.com/en/event/34-akbank-caz-festivali-jamzz-masterclass-programi-21-22_10_24



World Music from Kansas City to Anatolia

During the 2024–2025 academic year, Bahçeşehir University Conservatory hosted cellist Dr. Ezgi Karakuş and guitarist Beau Bledsoe of Ensemble Ibérica during their visit to Türkiye. The Ibérica Duo delivered a musical talk combining discussion and live performance, presenting a diverse world-music repertoire shaped by different geographical and cultural traditions. Through this event, BAU created an educational and artistic setting in which students and audiences could encounter musical practices extending from Kansas City to Anatolia.

The event contributed to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by supporting music as a form of living cultural heritage and creating space for different musical traditions to be performed, shared and reinterpreted. By bringing international artists into its Conservatory, Bahçeşehir University enriched Istanbul's cultural environment and promoted dialogue between local and global forms of artistic expression. The musical talk also supported SDG 4: Quality Education through experiential arts learning and SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals through international cultural exchange.



Masterclass by Gülsin Onay

During the 2024–2025 academic year, internationally renowned pianist Gülsin Onay met with Bahçeşehir University Conservatory students for a masterclass. Drawing on her distinguished career, Onay shared her artistic experience, interpretative approaches and performance techniques, offering young musicians specialist guidance on expressive depth, stage presence and the nuances of piano interpretation. Through this direct interaction with one of Türkiye's most celebrated artists, BAU connected conservatory education with high-level professional practice.

The masterclass contributed to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by supporting the intergenerational transmission of artistic knowledge and strengthening classical music as part of living cultural heritage. By bringing an established artist together with emerging musicians, Bahçeşehir University helped preserve performance traditions while enabling students to reinterpret and carry them into the future. The activity also supported SDG 4: Quality Education through practice-based learning and direct mentorship from an internationally recognised musician.



Beyond Borders: A Musical Odyssey

During the 2024–2025 academic year, Prof. Dr. Hyun Sook Tekin, internationally recognised pianist and Head of the Bahçeşehir University Music Department, performed a piano recital in the United States as part of the Boston Turkish Cultural and Art Festival. Her programme brought together works from different centuries and cultural traditions, including Schubert's Sonata D664, Granados' Poetic Waltzes, and compositions by Bach and Chopin.

A central part of the recital was Ahmet Adnan Saygun's From Anatolia (Op. 25), a work that reflects Türkiye's musical and cultural heritage. By presenting this composition to an international audience alongside major works of the classical repertoire, Prof. Dr. Tekin represented Bahçeşehir University as a contributor to the global circulation and appreciation of Türkiye's artistic heritage.

The recital contributed to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by safeguarding, interpreting and promoting music as a form of living cultural heritage. Through the international performance of Saygun's work, BAU helped carry Anatolia's cultural memory across geographical boundaries while encouraging dialogue among different musical traditions. The event also supported SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals through international cultural exchange.



BAU Conservatory Music Department Seminars: "The Business, Practical, Creative and Analytical View of Orchestration"

During the 2024–2025 academic year, Bahçeşehir University Conservatory hosted renowned bassist and orchestration specialist Dr. Norman Ludwin for an immersive seminar on the professional and artistic dimensions of orchestration. Drawing on his work for productions including The Matrix, Star Trek, Lost, Fringe and Beauty and the Beast, Dr. Ludwin introduced BAU students to musical textures, orchestration techniques, score preparation, analytical methods and film-music case studies. Performances of his compositions and an interactive question-and-answer session further connected theoretical learning with professional practice.

The seminar contributed to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by supporting the knowledge, skills and creative practices that sustain contemporary cultural production. Orchestration and film music form part of the evolving artistic heritage of modern societies, and their continuation depends on transferring specialist knowledge to new generations of musicians. By connecting BAU students with an internationally experienced practitioner, Bahçeşehir University strengthened music education and supported emerging artists who can contribute to the vitality and diversity of the cultural and creative sector. The session also advanced SDG 4: Quality Education through practice-based instruction and direct professional mentorship.



Celebrating The 100th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations Between Japan and Türkiye: "Turkish-Japanese Friendship Rakugo and Comedy"

During the 2024–2025 academic year, the "Turkish-Japanese Friendship Rakugo and Comedy" event was held at Atlas 1948 to mark the 100th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Türkiye and Japan. Organised in collaboration with the Japan Foundation, the Consulate General of Japan in Istanbul and Komedi Kulüp, the programme introduced audiences to Rakugo, a Japanese storytelling tradition with a history spanning approximately four centuries, and examined its continuing relationship with humour and contemporary society.

Featuring live performances by prominent Rakugo artists from Japan, the event brought intercultural exchange, theatre history and comedic performance together on one stage. Bahçeşehir University contributed academic expertise through the participation of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bülent Sezgin from the BAU Conservatory's Performing Arts Department, connecting the University's performing-arts scholarship with a public celebration of international cultural heritage.

The event contributed directly to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by making a long-established form of intangible cultural heritage accessible to contemporary audiences and supporting its continued transmission through live performance. Through its academic participation, Bahçeşehir University helped create dialogue between different theatrical traditions and strengthened Istanbul's role as a setting for intercultural artistic exchange. The collaboration among BAU, diplomatic institutions, a cultural foundation and the creative sector also supported SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals.



“Young Voices in Jazz” Concert by Barış Alp Dönmez, Cansu Nihal Akarsu and CRR Jazz Orchestra

During the 2024–2025 academic year, the “Young Voices in Jazz” concert created a professional performance platform for emerging musicians. Barış Alp Dönmez, a jazz vocal student in the Bahçeşehir University Conservatory Music Department, appeared as a special guest with the CRR Jazz Orchestra. By bringing a BAU student together with established performers, the concert enabled young talent to gain stage experience and connect with wider audiences.

The event contributed to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by supporting youth participation in cultural life and helping jazz remain a dynamic form of living musical heritage. Through the artistic development and public visibility of its students, Bahçeşehir University contributed to the continuity of jazz performance and strengthened the participation of a new generation in the city’s cultural ecosystem. The concert also supported SDG 4: Quality Education by extending music education into professional and public performance settings.



BAU Conservatory Music Department Seminars: "The Legend of Beethoven and the Conquest of the Symphonic Genre by Nineteenth Century Women Composers"

During the 2024–2025 academic year, Bahçeşehir University Conservatory hosted musicologist Dr. Mariacarla De Giorgi for a seminar examining Beethoven's legacy alongside women composers' entry into and transformation of the nineteenth-century symphonic tradition. The session introduced BAU students to the contributions of Louise Farrenc, Emilie Mayer, Louise Adolpha Le Beau and Alice Mary Smith, whose works have often received less recognition within conventional accounts of classical music history.

The seminar contributed to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by recovering, interpreting and communicating an underrepresented part of musical heritage. By bringing the works of these composers into academic discussion, Bahçeşehir University helped preserve cultural memory while promoting a more complete and inclusive understanding of the symphonic tradition. The activity also supported SDG 5: Gender Equality by increasing the visibility of women's historical contributions to music and SDG 4: Quality Education through critical, research-based music education.



Repertoire and Interpretation in Turkish Folk Music: Masterclass with Cengiz Özkan

During the 2024–2025 academic year, renowned Traditional Turkish Folk Music performer Cengiz Özkan delivered an intensive masterclass at Bahçeşehir University Conservatory. Combining practical exercises with discussions of musical tradition, Özkan shared specialist knowledge of repertoire, stylistic characteristics, interpretation and performance techniques with BAU's emerging musicians. The session connected conservatory education with the experience of an established practitioner of Türkiye's folk-music tradition.

The masterclass contributed directly to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by supporting Turkish folk music as a form of living intangible cultural heritage. Folk music carries regional histories, collective memory and cultural identity through melodies, lyrics and performance practices transmitted across generations. By enabling students to learn these traditions directly from a recognised artist, Bahçeşehir University helped safeguard this cultural knowledge while preparing a new generation of musicians to interpret, perform and carry it into the future. The programme also supported SDG 4: Quality Education through practice-based arts education and intergenerational learning.



Music and Education Seminar

During the 2024–2025 academic year, BAU Conservatory Director Dr. İsmet Aydın delivered a "Music and Education" seminar for students and their families at the Ordu Part-Time Children's Conservatory. The programme examined music education as a means of supporting children's personal and cognitive development, highlighting how structured musical training can strengthen creativity, discipline and cultural awareness. By involving families alongside students, the seminar also encouraged a supportive community around young people's long-term artistic development.

The seminar contributed to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by strengthening community participation in cultural life and supporting the intergenerational transmission of Turkish and global musical heritage. Through the participation of its Conservatory Director, Bahçeşehir University extended its academic and artistic expertise to children and families in Ordu, helping cultural knowledge and musical traditions reach younger generations in a community-based educational setting. The activity also advanced SDG 4: Quality Education by promoting accessible arts learning and raising awareness of music's role in children's holistic development.



Turkish Music Concert: Songs Loved by Atatürk

During the 2024–2025 academic year, Bahçeşehir University Conservatory organised the "Turkish Music Concert: Songs Loved by Atatürk", bringing together traditional and classical Turkish compositions associated with Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's musical preferences. Through performances by BAU Conservatory students and faculty members, the programme introduced audiences to the melodies, styles and repertoire connected with the cultural atmosphere of Türkiye's early Republican period.

The concert contributed directly to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by preserving and communicating music as a form of living cultural heritage. By placing historically significant compositions within a contemporary performance setting, Bahçeşehir University strengthened public appreciation of Türkiye's musical memory and enabled students to participate actively in transmitting this repertoire to new audiences. The event also supported SDG 4: Quality Education by connecting conservatory training with historical interpretation, public performance and experiential learning.





World Music Series: “Introduction to Hindustani Music: Tabla and Sitar Workshop”

During the 2024–2025 academic year, the World Music Workshop Series at Bahçeşehir University Conservatory brought artists representing different musical traditions together with students and music enthusiasts. As part of the series, Indian musicians Shrikant Rao and Shipra Dhawan delivered the “Introduction to Hindustani Music: Tabla and Sitar Workshop.” Through live demonstration and practice, participants explored the rhythmic structures, melodic systems, traditional ragas and performance practices associated with Hindustani music.

The workshop contributed to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by supporting the preservation, transmission and appreciation of music as intangible cultural heritage. By creating a setting in which Hindustani musical knowledge could be shared through direct engagement with its practitioners, Bahçeşehir University broadened access to diverse cultural expressions and strengthened intercultural participation within Istanbul’s artistic environment. The programme also supported SDG 4: Quality Education through experiential music learning and SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals through international artistic exchange.





World Pianists Day: Piano Marathon at BAU

During the 2024–2025 academic year, Bahçeşehir University celebrated World Pianists' Day with a special piano concert at Conference Hall B on its Beşiktaş South Campus. Internationally renowned pianist Gülsin Onay presented a programme that brought audiences together around classical and contemporary piano repertoire, transforming the University's campus into a space for shared artistic experience.

The event contributed to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by supporting public engagement with music and sustaining piano performance as part of living cultural heritage. By hosting an accomplished artist and making high-level musical performance part of its cultural environment, Bahçeşehir University strengthened access to artistic life and encouraged the appreciation, continuation and transmission of piano traditions among contemporary audiences. The concert also complemented SDG 4: Quality Education by enriching the University's learning environment through direct exposure to professional artistic practice.





Rumi Meets Bulleshah – Indo-Turkish Production: İsmet Aydın with Kachara Khan and Group

During the 2024–2025 academic year, BAU Conservatory Director Dr. İsmet Aydın returned to the stage in India following an invitation connected with his earlier participation in a concert held as part of the G20 Summit. Performing with Kachara Khan and his group at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya in Mumbai, Dr. Aydın contributed his voice and saz to a special programme celebrating Mevlânâ Celâleddîn-i Rûmî and Bulleh Shah. The production brought together the legacies of two influential poets and philosophers whose works represent treasured contributions from Anatolia and the Indian subcontinent to global cultural heritage.

The programme contributed directly to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by interpreting and transmitting literary and musical heritage through contemporary performance. Presented in a museum dedicated to preserving India's history, the concert created a dialogue between Anatolian and South Asian cultural traditions and demonstrated how historic poetry, philosophy and music can remain meaningful to present-day audiences. Through its Conservatory Director's participation, Bahçeşehir University carried Türkiye's musical heritage into an international cultural setting and strengthened mutual appreciation between different traditions. The Indo-Turkish collaboration also supported SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals through cross-border artistic exchange.



BAU Conservatory: Musicology Seminar Series: "Writing Music in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Istanbul: Hamparsum and the Invention of Tradition"

During the 2024–2025 academic year, Bahçeşehir University Conservatory hosted Dr. Tülin Değirmenci from Harvard University's Center for Middle Eastern Studies for a seminar on music writing in nineteenth-century Ottoman Istanbul. Focusing on Hamparsum notation, the session examined historical turning points in musical notation and traced how Istanbul's musical traditions were recorded, transmitted and carried into the present.

The seminar connected archival research with live performance. Neyzen Mahmut Ergin, one of BAU Conservatory's first graduates, performed works that Dr. Değirmenci had transcribed from historical manuscripts, allowing participants to hear musical material preserved in written sources and experience aspects of Istanbul's historical soundscape.

The event contributed directly to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by recovering, interpreting and communicating the musical heritage of Istanbul. Through the study of historical notation and the performance of manuscript-based repertoire, Bahçeşehir University helped transform archival materials into living cultural knowledge, supporting the continuation of the city's musical memory across generations. The seminar also advanced SDG 4: Quality Education through research-led and performance-based learning and SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals through international academic exchange.





The Second Stage of the "Urban Reconstruction of the Old Town of Antakya" Research Project





During the 2024–2025 academic year, Bahçeşehir University academics Assist. Prof. Dr. Sinem Kültür and Research Assistant Ayşe Eda Adıgüzel participated in the second stage of the "Urban Reconstruction of the Old Town of Antakya" research project. Financially supported by Japan's Agency for Cultural Affairs, this stage was conducted in collaboration with Mukogawa University in Japan. The BAU researchers contributed local knowledge of Antakya to discussions with Japanese academics and graduate students and took part in the project's research and data-analysis processes.

The programme included technical visits to E-Defense, E-Isolation and Kyoto University's Disaster Prevention Research Institute, as well as the Port of Kobe Earthquake Memorial Park and Gran Green Osaka. These visits enabled the BAU researchers to examine Japan's approaches to disaster prevention, seismic resilience and post-earthquake urban recovery. Reconstructed heritage buildings in Kobe were also studied to understand how seismic-isolation technologies can be incorporated into historic structures without disregarding their cultural value.

Through studio studies, model-making and design critiques, the project developed shared approaches to Antakya's post-disaster reconstruction while strengthening international knowledge exchange. The Japanese stage concluded with graduate student presentations, and the Türkiye stage culminated in a closing symposium hosted by Bahçeşehir University on 7 November.

The project contributed directly to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by connecting disaster-resilient urban reconstruction with the protection of Antakya's architectural and cultural heritage. Through the participation of its academics and the symposium held on its campus, Bahçeşehir University helped bring international research, local knowledge and design expertise together to support a safer, culturally sensitive and more resilient future for the historic city. The initiative also supported SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure through its focus on seismic technologies and SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals through Türkiye–Japan academic cooperation.

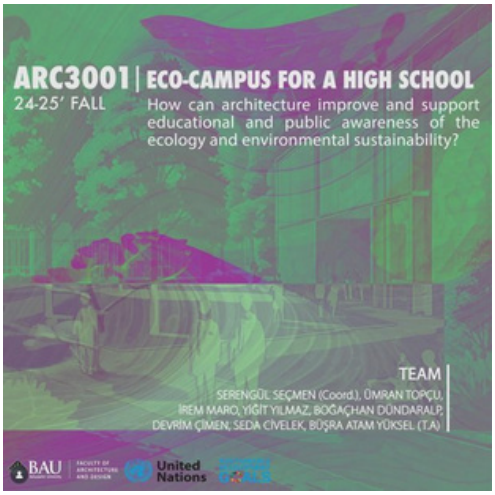




"Eco-Campus for A High School" Design Project

During the fall semester of the 2024–2025 academic year, Bahçeşehir University students enrolled in the ARC3001 Architectural Design Studio developed the "Eco-Campus for a High School" project, exploring how architectural design can contribute to environmental sustainability and ecological awareness in educational environments. Through their design proposals, students investigated the integration of green infrastructure, renewable energy systems, resource-efficient building solutions, and adaptable learning spaces, envisioning educational campuses that combine functional needs with environmental responsibility.

The project contributes to SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) by promoting sustainable architectural approaches that can reduce the environmental footprint of educational buildings and support greener, more resilient urban environments. Its emphasis on environmentally responsible design is particularly relevant to SDG Target 11.6, which focuses on reducing the adverse environmental impact of cities, while its integration of green spaces and community-oriented educational environments also relates to Target 11.7, which promotes access to safe, inclusive, and accessible green and public spaces. By encouraging future architects to incorporate sustainability principles into their design practice, the studio supports the development of more environmentally conscious and sustainable built environments. The initiative also aligns with SDG 4 (Quality Education) through its integration of sustainability into architectural education.



“Reviving the Historical Urban Fabric of Antakya” International Symposium

In 2024-2025 academic year, the symposium “Reviving the Historical Urban Fabric of Antakya”, jointly organized by Bahçeşehir University Faculty of Architecture and Design and Mukogawa University (Japan), with the support of the Agency for Cultural Affairs of Japan, was held at Bahçeşehir University's Fazıl Say Conference Hall. The event presented research findings and architectural design proposals developed through an international collaboration focused on the preservation and post-earthquake revitalization of Antakya's historic urban fabric.

Bringing together Turkish and Japanese academics, the symposium explored approaches to restoring Antakya's architectural heritage, safeguarding its cultural identity, and integrating disaster resilience into the recovery of historic urban environments. The discussions emphasized the importance of rebuilding not only physical structures but also the cultural continuity and collective memory that define local communities.

The initiative makes a significant contribution to SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) by advancing knowledge and international cooperation on heritage-sensitive, disaster-resilient urban recovery. It is particularly aligned with SDG Target 11.4, which calls for safeguarding cultural heritage, and Target 11.b, which promotes integrated disaster risk reduction and resilience strategies. By connecting architectural conservation with sustainable post-disaster reconstruction, the project highlights the importance of rebuilding cities in ways that protect their historical identity while strengthening their resilience to future disasters. The collaboration also supports SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) through international academic and institutional cooperation.





ArchiDesign Talks Hosted Giulia Annalinda Neglia, Professor of Landscape Architecture

In the 2024–2025 academic year, Bahçeşehir University hosted Giulia Annalinda Neglia, Associate Professor of Landscape Architecture at the Polytechnic University of Bari, as part of its ArchiDesign Talks series. Drawing on her international research and collaborations with UNESCO, UN-Habitat, and ICOMOS, Prof. Neglia explored the relationship between landscape architecture, urban resilience, cultural heritage preservation, and sustainable urban development. The event highlighted how architectural and landscape design can protect local identity, strengthen community well-being, and support more resilient urban environments.

The initiative contributes to SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) by promoting knowledge exchange on heritage-sensitive urban planning and the integration of cultural identity into sustainable spatial development. It is particularly relevant to SDG Target 11.4, which focuses on safeguarding cultural and natural heritage, and Target 11.3, which promotes inclusive and sustainable urban planning and management.



Integrating Sustainable Supply Chain, Industrial Symbiosis, and Waste Management

In 2024-2025 academic year, The Deputy Director of CIFAL Istanbul, Yasemin Ülker PhD., participated as a visiting scholar at Nova School of Science and Technology from 9–15 September, presenting her work on Integrating Sustainable Supply Chains, Industrial Symbiosis, and Waste Management. Her presentation highlighted sustainable supply chains, industrial symbiosis, and waste management, emphasizing the need to rethink processes and product features to reduce environmental impacts, support responsible production and consumption, and contribute to more sustainable urban development while addressing climate challenges.

The presentation contributed to SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) by highlighting how sustainable supply chains, responsible industrial practices, and effective waste management can support the development of more environmentally sustainable urban environments. By exploring opportunities to reduce waste generation, improve resource efficiency, and reconsider the environmental impacts of industrial processes and products, the research addresses challenges that directly affect urban sustainability. This perspective is particularly relevant to SDG Target 11.6, which calls for reducing the adverse environmental impact of cities, with particular attention to waste management. Through international academic knowledge exchange, the presentation supports a broader understanding of how responsible industrial transformation can contribute to cleaner, more resource-efficient, and sustainable cities.



BAU Radio Fest: Seminar on Animal Welfare in the Context of Sustainable Development Goals

In 2024-2025 academic year, as part of the BAU Radio Fest, Bahçeşehir University, in collaboration with CIFAL Istanbul, UNITAR and HAÇİKO – Association for the Protection of Animals from Desperation and Indifference, hosted an open-access seminar titled "Animal Welfare in the Context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)." The event brought together students, academics, civil society representatives, and the general public, offering an inclusive platform for dialogue on ethical responsibility, environmental sustainability, and compassionate coexistence.

The seminar explored the interconnection between animal welfare and sustainable development, emphasizing that the well-being of animals is integral to achieving a balanced and equitable future for all living beings. Speakers underlined how ethical awareness, empathy, and civic engagement can transform societal attitudes toward animals, encouraging policies and behaviors that foster coexistence, respect for life, and environmental harmony.

Discussions focused on the protection of stray animals, urban biodiversity, and the ecological role of companion animals in creating healthier, more livable cities. Participants examined how responsible urban planning, waste management, and environmental education contribute not only to SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) but also to SDG 15 (Life on Land) — by protecting ecosystems, reducing human-wildlife conflicts, and strengthening the moral foundations of sustainability.

By hosting this seminar, Bahçeşehir University reaffirmed its commitment to ethical sustainability, environmental education, and social inclusion. Through collaborative efforts with civil society and international partners, the University continues to raise awareness on how protecting animal welfare is inseparable from protecting the planet, reflecting its holistic approach to sustainability where every living being is part of a shared ecological future.





CIFAL Istanbul Team's Visit to the Earthquake Zone in Malatya





On December 13, the CIFAL Istanbul team organized an educational event in Battalgazi, Malatya, titled "Heroes of Nature: Raising Awareness on Sustainability," bringing together children and their parents affected by the February 6 earthquakes. Through interactive presentations, participants learned about the mission of the United Nations and how individuals can contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals. The discussions covered clean water, renewable energy, sustainable cities, and climate action, while emphasizing waste reduction and eco-friendly living practices. By supporting environmental awareness and community resilience, this initiative helped empower the people of Malatya as they rebuilt their lives after the devastating earthquakes, fostering both education and local engagement toward a more sustainable future.

Management of Rural Development Strategies Aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals: Developing an Adaptable Balanced Scorecard Model for Local Governments – TÜBİTAK 3005 Project

Supported under the TÜBİTAK 3005 programme, this research project was conducted during the 2024–2025 Fall semester with Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ayla Esen from Bahçeşehir University's Department of International Trade and Business serving as a member of the research team. The project develops an adaptable Balanced Scorecard model designed to help local governments align rural development strategies with the Sustainable Development Goals. Its pilot implementation, undertaken in collaboration with the municipalities of Pamukova and Geyve in Sakarya, connects academic research with local decision-making and the specific development needs of rural communities.

By equipping municipalities with a strategic framework for planning, implementing and monitoring rural development, the project contributes directly to SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). It supports integrated rural–urban planning, participatory local governance and the development of communities that are more resilient to social, economic and environmental pressures. The project also advances SDG 1 (No Poverty) by informing inclusive policies aimed at reducing rural vulnerability and improving development opportunities.

Preliminary findings were presented by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Esen in "Enhancing Rural Resilience through Strategic Governance: The Case of Türkiye" during the Urban and Regional Resilience session of the 31st International Sustainable Development Research Society Conference, held at Corvinus University of Budapest on 9–12 July 2025. This international dissemination further demonstrates BAU's contribution to evidence-based approaches for more inclusive, sustainable and resilient territorial development.


Pamukova Belediyesi · Stratejik Yönetim Çerçevesi TUBITAK ARDEB 3005 · No. 224K582 · Sakarya Üniversitesi

TÜBİTAK ARDEB 3005 · Proje No. 224K582

Pamukova'nın Geleceği İçin Stratejik Yönetim Çerçevesi

Belediye Meclisi Bilgilendirme Dokümanı

Sakarya Üniversitesi · Bahçeşehir Üniversitesi · De Montfort Üniversitesi

1. Bu Doküman Neden Hazırlandı?

Sakarya Üniversitesi liderliğinde, Bahçeşehir Üniversitesi ve De Montfort Üniversitesi (İngiltere) iş birliğiyle yürütülen TÜBİTAK ARDEB 3005 projesi kapsamında Pamukova'da kapsamlı bir saha araştırması gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmanın temel sorusu şudur:

Pamukova'nın kırsal kalkınma potansiyeli nasıl daha sistematik, ölçülebilir ve sürdürülebilir biçimde yönetilebilir?

Bu doküman, araştırmanın bulgularını ve önerilen yönetim modelini Pamukova Belediyesi Meclis üyelerine aktarmak amacıyla hazırlanmıştır. İlçenin güçlü yanlarını ön plana çıkaran, mevcut durumu eleştiren değil çözüm sunan bir çerçeve sunmaktadır.

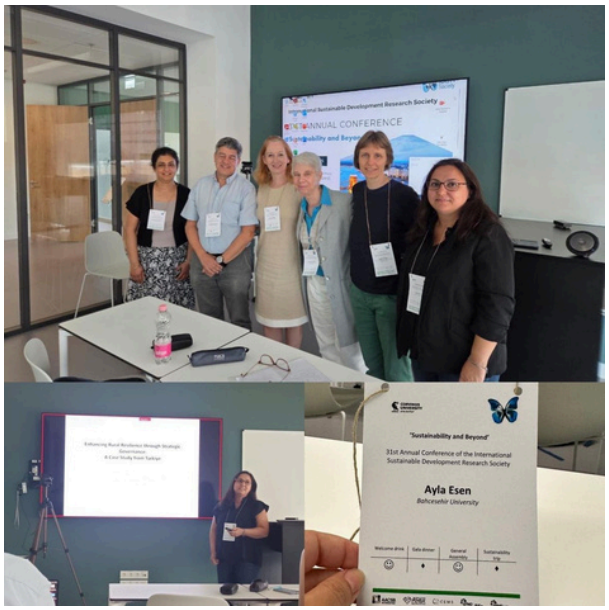
2. Araştırmamız Nasıl Yürütüldü?

Araştırma süreci üç temel ilkeye dayalı olarak tasarlanmıştır: katılımcılık, çok yöntemlilik ve yerel bağlama duyarlılık.

120+ görüşme

Görüşülen Paydaş Grupları
- Çiftçiler ve üreticiler
- Gençler ve kadın kooperatifleri
- Belediye personeli
- Muhtarlar ve oda temsilcileri

Kullanılan Yöntemler
- Çalıştaylar ve odak gruplar
- Tematik kodlama analizi
- Network (ilişki ağı) analizi
- Veri üçgenleme



https://bau.edu.tr/blog/tr/18685-stratejik-yonetisim-yoluyla-kirsal-direncin-artirilmasi-turkiye-ornegi

Disaster-Resilient Cities–Avcılar: Workshop and NGO Training Policy Contribution

On 2 July 2025, Bahçeşehir University faculty member Prof. Dr. Nilüfer Narlı contributed to the "Disaster-Resilient Cities–Avcılar" workshop, which brought together local government, civil society and disaster-management stakeholders. Financed by the European Union and implemented under UNDP's Civil Participation framework, the project was conducted in partnership with the Marmara Group Foundation and Avcılar Municipality, with the participation of AFAD. Drawing on a needs analysis involving 100 civil society organisations and an extensive literature review, Prof. Narlı presented a policy document designed to guide NGO training in disaster preparedness.

By strengthening institutional capacity, knowledge exchange and coordination among local actors, the workshop directly supported SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), particularly the development of inclusive, participatory and disaster-resilient urban communities. BAU's research-based policy contribution helped connect civil society needs with local preparedness strategies, demonstrating the importance of academic expertise in reducing urban disaster risks.

The multi-stakeholder structure of the initiative also advanced SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), while its emphasis on NGO training and capacity development contributed to SDG 4 (Quality Education).



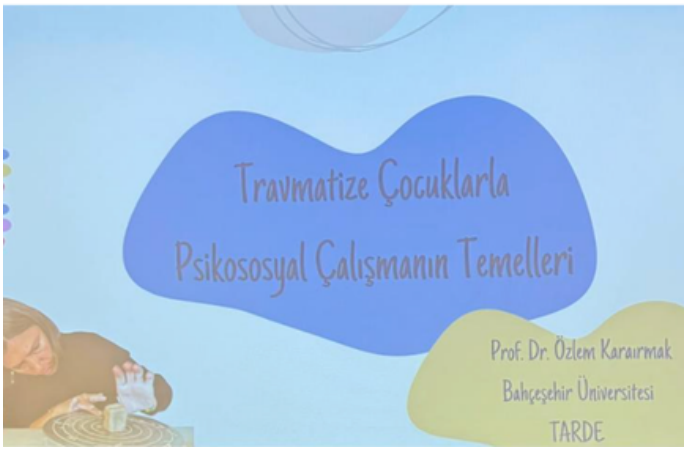


Strengthening Post-Disaster Psychosocial Support Beyond Campus: Professional Capacity Building in Gaziantep

On 16 November 2025, Prof. Dr. Özlem Karaırmak, representing Bahçeşehir University and the Trauma and Disaster Mental Health Studies Association (TARDE), delivered a specialized training session titled “Fundamentals of Psychosocial Work with Traumatized Children” in Gaziantep, Türkiye. The training brought together field practitioners working across earthquake-affected provinces, focusing on strengthening their professional knowledge and competencies in providing trauma-informed psychosocial support to children affected by disasters. Drawing on cognitive and somatic awareness approaches, Prof. Dr. Karaırmak addressed the importance of understanding children's psychological and emotional responses to traumatic experiences and introduced methods for responding to their post-disaster psychosocial needs. By delivering this specialized training directly in an earthquake-affected region, Bahçeşehir University extended its academic expertise beyond its campus to professionals working with vulnerable communities.

The initiative represented an important educational outreach and professional capacity-building activity, connecting university-level psychological expertise with the practical needs of professionals supporting disaster-affected children and families. Through Prof. Dr. Karaırmak's training, participants explored trauma-sensitive approaches intended to strengthen their ability to recognize children's psychosocial needs and provide appropriate support during recovery processes. The programme emphasized the importance of equipping local practitioners with specialized knowledge applicable to community-based psychosocial services and child-focused recovery activities. By bringing professional education directly to practitioners in Gaziantep, the initiative facilitated knowledge transfer beyond formal higher education settings and supported the development of local capacities for long-term psychosocial recovery.





The initiative directly contributed to SDG 4: Quality Education by providing specialized professional development opportunities, promoting lifelong learning, and strengthening practitioners' competencies in trauma-informed approaches that can support children's emotional well-being and educational development. It demonstrated Bahçeşehir University's commitment to making academic knowledge accessible to professionals outside the university community, particularly those working in regions experiencing significant social and educational challenges. Furthermore, the programme strongly aligned with SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being by supporting psychosocial recovery and mental health awareness, and SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by contributing to the development of resilient community support systems in earthquake-affected areas. Through this initiative, Bahçeşehir University reinforced its role in connecting academic expertise with community needs and supporting sustainable, inclusive post-disaster recovery through education.

Field Research on the Societal and Psychosocial Impacts of the 6 February Earthquakes

Presented on 11 April 2025 during the "Earthquake and Mental Health" panel at the 4th Türkiye Traumatic Stress Congress and Workshop on the First Three Days of the Istanbul Earthquake, the field-based study "From the Six February Earthquakes to Social Solidarity: An Example of Fieldwork" was presented by Özlem Karairmak from Bahçeşehir University. Drawing on field observations from earthquake-affected communities, the presentation explored the psychological and social consequences of the disaster, emphasizing the importance of social solidarity, community support networks, and psychosocial resilience in post-disaster recovery.

The study makes a meaningful contribution to SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) by highlighting the social dimensions of disaster resilience and the importance of strengthening community-based support systems in earthquake-prone urban environments. Its findings are particularly relevant to SDG Target 11.5, which focuses on reducing the human impact of disasters, and Target 11.b, which promotes integrated disaster risk reduction and resilience strategies. By connecting field-based evidence with discussions on community recovery and preparedness, the research contributes to a more people-centred understanding of resilient cities. Its emphasis on trauma, mental health, and psychosocial well-being also supports SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being).



Psychosocial Resilience and Field Worker Support in Disaster Recovery

On 7 March 2025, in cooperation with the Trauma and Disaster Mental Health Studies Association (TARDE), Prof. Dr. Özlem Karaırmak of Bahçeşehir University conducted two "Art-Based Support Group for Field Workers" sessions at the Kahramanmaraş Airport Container City. The programme provided specialised psychosocial support to frontline personnel from public institutions and civil society organisations delivering essential services in disaster-affected temporary settlements.

By strengthening field workers' coping capacities and psychological resilience, the initiative helped sustain the human support systems on which community-centred disaster recovery depends. It therefore contributed directly to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by reinforcing local recovery capacity and supporting more resilient communities in post-disaster urban settings. Its emphasis on the mental well-being of frontline workers also advanced SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being, while cooperation between the University, TARDE and organisations operating in the field reflected SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals.



Doctoral Research on Climate Action, Eco-Anxiety and Community Resilience

Completed in 2025 within Bahçeşehir University's Guidance and Psychological Counselling Doctoral Programme, Dr. Hande Korkmaz Çakır's dissertation was supervised by Prof. Dr. Berna Güloğlu and defended in January 2025. Titled "Predictors of Being an Individual Climate Activist in the Fight Against Climate Change: A Structural Equation Modelling," the study examined the psychological factors influencing personal engagement in climate-change mitigation and adaptation. Using structural equation modelling and data from 752 participants aged 18–36 across Türkiye, it explored the relationships among climate-change awareness, fundamental world assumptions, connectedness to nature, general anxiety, eco-anxiety and individual climate action.

The findings indicate that climate awareness, positive world assumptions and connectedness to nature encourage pro-environmental behaviour, while eco-anxiety can act as a mediating mechanism that transforms environmental concern into climate action. By generating evidence that can inform climate education, psychological counselling and public policy, the research contributes primarily to SDG 13: Climate Action, particularly efforts to strengthen climate awareness, adaptive capacity and public participation.

The study also relates to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, as climate-resilient settlements depend not only on infrastructure and institutional planning but also on informed, engaged and psychologically resilient communities capable of participating in local mitigation and adaptation efforts. Its examination of climate-related emotional distress among young people further supports SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being, highlighting the importance of integrating mental-health considerations into climate-resilience policies.




T.C.
BAHÇEŞEHİR ÜNİVERSİTESİ
LİSANSÜSTÜ EĞİTİM ENSTİTÜSÜ
EĞİTİM BİLİMLERİ ANABİLİM DALI

İKLİM DEĞİŞİKLİĞİ İLE MÜCADELEDE BİREYSEL İKLİM AKTİVİSTİ OLMANIN YORDAYICILARI: BİR YAPISAL EŞİTLİK MODELLEMESİ

DOKTORA TEZİ

HANDE KORKMAZ ÇAKIR

İSTANBUL 2025

TÜBİTAK 3501 Project 123K129 – SOBİD: Climate Education for Sustainable and Resilient Communities

Between 2025 and 2025, Led by Bahçeşehir University^s academician Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nilay Öztürk, the SOBİD project developed and implemented a teaching module that addressed climate change through a socioscientific issues approach. The project combined teacher professional development, climate-focused lesson planning and research into students' climate literacy. Its findings and educational materials were also shared with teachers through a dedicated workshop, helping translate academic research into classroom practice.

By equipping teachers and students to understand the social, scientific and local dimensions of climate change, SOBİD contributed to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities through the development of informed communities better prepared to participate in urban sustainability and climate-resilience efforts. The project contributed directly to SDG 4: Quality Education by advancing research-informed teaching and teacher capacity, while its emphasis on climate literacy, awareness and responsible action also supported SDG 13: Climate Action.





MIPCOM 2025: Preserving Cultural Heritage through Global Storytelling and Creative Partnerships

On 16 October 2025, Bahçeşehir University's Center for Civilization Studies (MEDAM) participated in MIPCOM 2025, an international gathering of broadcasters, distributors and creative-sector partners. MEDAM presented both its ongoing projects and new documentary productions under development, creating opportunities to bring stories about history, civilizations and different geographies to wider international audiences.

By using documentary production to record, interpret and circulate cultural narratives, MEDAM contributes to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, particularly the protection and promotion of cultural heritage. Its storytelling approach helps preserve collective memory, strengthen awareness of diverse cultural identities and make historical and cultural knowledge accessible across geographical boundaries. The international collaborations initiated at MIPCOM also support SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals by connecting BAU's cultural research and creative production with global media networks committed to cross-cultural exchange.



Bahçeşehir University Games for Change Türkiye Festival 2025: International NGO Partnership and Cross-Sectoral Dialogue on Sustainable Cities, Climate Action and Social Impact



On 6–7 December 2025, Bahçeşehir University (BAU), through its BAU Game Lab (BUG Lab), organized and hosted the Games for Change Türkiye Festival 2025 at its Beşiktaş Campus, in collaboration with Games for Change Türkiye, the Turkish chapter of Games for Change Global, an international non-profit organization founded in 2004 that promotes social impact through games and interactive media.

Games for Change Türkiye was established in 2024 within BAU BUG Lab, creating an institutional connection between the University and the international Games for Change network. At the global level, Games for Change has developed collaborations with international organizations, including UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Food Programme (WFP), demonstrating the network's broader engagement with education, social development, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Held under the theme "City and Play: Gaming the City, Modding the Future," the festival brought together over 500 participants, including more than 100 international attendees from 10 countries, providing a platform for dialogue among academia, public institutions, civil society, international networks, urban planning professionals, and the private sector.

The programme featured contributions from the Istanbul Planning Agency (İPA), alongside urban design and participatory planning organizations such as Superpool and Play the City, as well as international academics, game developers, and creative industry representatives. Private-sector sponsors, including Tencent, TaleWorlds Entertainment, Masomo, and Monster Notebook, further supported the initiative, demonstrating cooperation between higher education and the technology and gaming industries.

Through expert panels, presentations, interactive discussions, and game exhibitions, participants explored sustainable cities, climate action, gender equality, cultural heritage preservation, environmental awareness, and inclusive community development. Sessions on participatory public-space transformation, urban planning, and game-based approaches to social challenges demonstrated how collaboration among public institutions, academia, civil society, and the creative industries can generate innovative solutions to complex urban and societal challenges. The programme highlighted the potential of games and digital technologies to strengthen community participation, promote sustainability awareness, and support more inclusive and resilient cities.

By bringing together an international non-profit network, public-sector urban planning stakeholders, academic institutions, civil society actors, and private-sector partners, BAU facilitated cross-sectoral dialogue and knowledge exchange on SDG-related challenges. The programme connected different forms of expertise and encouraged collaborative approaches to sustainable cities, inclusive communities, and social innovation.

Importantly, BAU's engagement extended beyond hosting a single event. Through BUG Lab's institutional role in Games for Change Türkiye, the University contributed to an ongoing international collaboration linking academic research, public policy, civil society initiatives, and the creative industries in support of sustainable development.

The initiative contributed primarily to SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) by strengthening international and cross-sectoral partnerships. It also supported SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) through participatory urban development, SDG 13 (Climate Action) through sustainability-focused discussions, SDG 5 (Gender Equality) through social inclusion, and SDG 4 (Quality Education) through public knowledge exchange and innovative learning approaches.

The official festival programme below documents the Games for Change Türkiye Festival 2025, highlighting expert panels and discussions on sustainable cities, participatory urban planning, gender equality, diversity, community building, and the role of games in addressing social and environmental challenges.

The three photographs below document the Games for Change Türkiye Festival 2025 held at Bahçeşehir University's Beşiktaş Campus, illustrating the event's international participation, expert discussions, and interactive activities that brought together stakeholders from academia, civil society, public institutions, and the creative industries to explore sustainability and social impact through games.



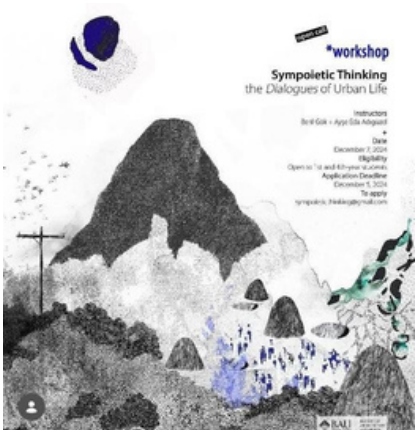


“Sympoietic Thinking: The Dialogues of Urban Life” Workshop (Fall Semester 2024–2025)

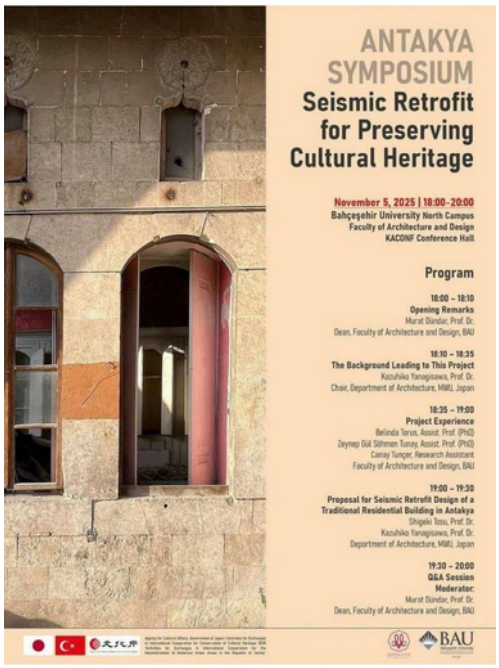
Conducted by Research Assistant Beril Gök from the Department of Interior Architecture and Environmental Design and Research Assistant Ayşe Eda Adıgüzel from the Department of Architecture, the workshop explored the interconnected relationships among nature, culture and urban life. Through a collaborative research process, students and facilitators examined cities as environments shaped collectively by human communities, ecological systems and cultural practices, producing original conceptual and visual works.

By encouraging students to reconsider how urban environments can support coexistence, ecological responsibility and collective life, the workshop contributed directly to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities. It introduced critical perspectives relevant to the design of more sustainable and socially responsive urban spaces while strengthening students’ capacity to approach architectural and environmental challenges holistically.

The resulting work was incorporated into students’ professional representation practices; for example, fourth-year Interior Architecture student Ece Pamuk included the workshop output in her personal portfolio. This integration demonstrates the activity’s contribution to SDG 4: Quality Education through research-based and practice-oriented learning. Its focus on relationships between human settlements and natural systems also supported SDG 15: Life on Land.



Seismic Retrofit for Preserving Cultural Heritage Symposium



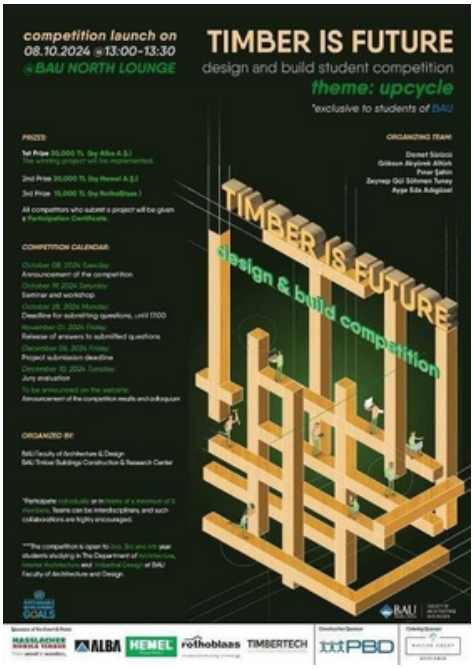
On 5 November 2025, held at the Bahçeşehir University North Campus Conference Hall, the symposium presented project experiences and design proposals concerning the seismic retrofitting of a traditional residential building in Antakya. The programme brought together Prof. Dr. Murat Dündar; Prof. Dr. Kazuhiko Yanagisawa and Prof. Dr. Shigeki Tosu from Mukogawa Women's University; and Assist. Prof. Dr. Belinda Torus, Assist. Prof. Dr. Zeynep Gül Söhmen Tunay and Research Assistant Canay Tunçer from Bahçeşehir University. The Consulate General of Japan in Istanbul and its Cultural Attaché also participated in the event.

Building upon the international cooperation established through the Antakya revitalisation project, the symposium facilitated the exchange of architectural and engineering knowledge on safeguarding heritage buildings in earthquake-prone regions. By connecting cultural preservation with disaster-risk reduction, it contributed directly to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, particularly efforts to protect cultural heritage, reduce disaster-related losses and support the resilient recovery of historically significant urban areas.

The discussion of seismic-retrofitting methods and resilient building solutions also advanced SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure. The sustained collaboration among BAU, Mukogawa Women's University and Japanese diplomatic representatives further supported SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals through international academic and cultural cooperation.

“Timber is Future: Design and Build” Competition: Upcycling and Sustainable Urban Furniture





Organised by Bahçeşehir University’s Faculty of Architecture and Design in the 2024-2025 academic year, the “Timber is Future: Design and Build” competition invited students to design urban furniture around the themes of timber and upcycling. The competition provided a learning and application environment in which participants explored timber as a renewable building material and considered how design decisions can support more responsible material use. By connecting architectural and engineering perspectives, it encouraged students to examine how materials can be given renewed value through practical design and production processes.

The competition supported SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production by placing upcycling and resource-conscious design at the centre of students’ work. Designing urban furniture through these themes encouraged participants to consider the potential of existing materials, extend their useful life and explore alternatives to disposal. Collaboration with national and international companies in the timber sector supported the award and sponsorship process, while helping students connect design proposals with production knowledge and develop interdisciplinary teamwork skills.

The competition also contributed to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by applying sustainable material choices to urban furniture intended for shared environments. It encouraged students to consider how the objects that shape everyday urban life can combine practical functions with responsible resource use. Through this connection between material reuse and urban design, the competition brought the principles of sustainable consumption and production into the development of more sustainable public spaces.

“Recycling Station” Student Project Competition: Circular Economy and Sustainable Campus Design



Between 3 March and 9 May 2025, organised jointly by the Bahçeşehir University Timber Structures Application and Research Centre and the BAU Faculty of Architecture and Design, the “Recycling Station” Student Project Competition invited students to design a sustainable, functional and aesthetically considered recycling station for university campuses. Centred on sustainable development, waste management and the circular economy, the competition encouraged participants to translate environmental awareness into practical design proposals for shared campus spaces. The competition programme included supporting seminars and a publicly shared jury and award process, with the participation period extended to encourage wider involvement.

The competition supported SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production by encouraging designs that facilitate waste separation and recycling in everyday campus life. It challenged students to consider how the organisation, accessibility and usability of recycling stations can support responsible waste disposal and the recovery of materials. Supported by the MDF and Particleboard Industrialists Association, Yıldız Entegre, the Mind Your Waste Foundation, the Zero Waste movement and the BAU Technology Transfer Office, the initiative connected student design work with broader efforts to reduce waste and promote circular resource use.

The initiative also contributed to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by approaching waste management as a design concern within shared environments. Recycling stations that are functional, accessible and integrated into their surroundings can help make sustainable practices easier for campus communities. By bringing these considerations into campus-scale proposals, the competition connected responsible consumption and production with the design of cleaner, more sustainable communal spaces.

ICSA in Istanbul : Architectural Heritage, Conservation and Intercultural Urban Studies





In the 2024-2025 academic year, Bahçeşehir University and Mukogawa Women's University jointly organised the 15th edition of ICSA in Istanbul, an international academic programme centred on architectural heritage, cultural exchange and urban observation. Faculty members and graduate students from MWU's Conservation and Restoration Programme visited Ürgüp, Istanbul, Bursa and Edirne under the guidance of academics from the Bahçeşehir University Faculty of Architecture and Design. Through field visits and workshops, including activities affiliated with the National Palaces, participants examined historically and culturally significant buildings, public spaces and urban environments while engaging with approaches to their conservation and restoration.

Throughout the programme, students documented the architectural characteristics, cultural meanings and urban contexts of the places they visited through observational sketches. These works, exhibited at the BAU Faculty of Architecture and Design on 8 November, transformed field observations into a visual record of Türkiye's built heritage.

The programme contributed directly to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by strengthening knowledge and awareness concerning the protection and safeguarding of architectural and cultural heritage. By connecting documentation, conservation practice and intercultural perspectives, BAU supported the education of future professionals capable of recognising the value of historic urban environments and contributing to their responsible preservation.

Yeditepeden Yankılar: Cultural Memory and Urban Mapping Research


Salt Araştırma Fonları 2025 yılı projeleri belirlendi

Kazlıçeşme'de deri işçileri, 1987 (Fotoğraf: Ali Öz)
Salt Araştırma, Ali Öz Arşivi



In 2025, Conducted by Prof. Dr. Nilay Ünsal Gülmez and Assist. Prof. Dr. Berna Yaylalı from Bahçeşehir University, Yeditepeden Yankılar was selected as one of eight projects supported by the SALT Research Funds 2025 from among 220 applications. The project examines 24 surviving recordings from Baki Süha Edipoğlu's 1963 Istanbul Radio programme, using them as historical sources for exploring Istanbul's neighbourhoods, everyday urban experiences and cultural memory.

Through multilayered mapping, the researchers investigated the connections between place, collective experience and the changing cultural identity of the city. By bringing archival audio materials together with spatial research, the project developed an innovative method for documenting and interpreting cultural narratives that might otherwise remain inaccessible or be lost over time. Its findings were presented in December 2025 as part of the SALT Research Funds programme, opening the research to broader academic and public discussion.

The project contributes directly to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by supporting the documentation, interpretation and communication of Istanbul's urban cultural heritage. Its focus on the relationship between neighbourhoods, memory and lived experience expands heritage preservation beyond physical structures to include the voices, narratives and collective memories that give urban places their cultural meaning. Through this research-based approach, the project strengthens architectural scholarship's contribution to safeguarding and communicating the multilayered heritage of cities.

From Constantinople to Istanbul: Exploring the Byzantine Heritage and Urban Memory of Istanbul



Between 8-12 September 2025, The From Constantinople to Istanbul: The Byzantine Heritage of Istanbul Fall Workshop was organised through a collaboration between Bahçeşehir University and the Barcelona School of Architecture (ETSAB), with contributions from LLOTJA, Yeditepe University and AURA Istanbul. Bringing together students and academics from different institutional and cultural backgrounds, the workshop examined how successive historical periods have shaped Istanbul's architectural identity and contemporary urban fabric.

Participants attended discussion sessions at AURA Istanbul and conducted field studies at historically significant urban sites, including the Istanbul Textile Traders' Market (İMÇ), Molla Zeyrek Mosque and Süleymaniye Mosque. The programme concluded with jury evaluations of student video presentations interpreting the city's architectural heritage, historical continuity and collective memory. These audiovisual works enabled participants to document their observations and communicate the cultural meanings embedded within Istanbul's built environment.

The workshop contributed directly to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by developing awareness of the need to protect and communicate urban cultural heritage. By approaching Istanbul as a multilayered city in which Byzantine, Ottoman and modern structures form a continuous cultural landscape, the programme encouraged future architects to consider historical memory within contemporary urban development. Its field-based educational model also supported SDG 4: Quality Education, while cooperation among universities and cultural institutions advanced SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals.

CIFAL Istanbul at NADMEX: Advancing Disaster-Resilient Cities and Communities



In the 2024-2025 academic year, Bahçeşehir University and CIFAL Istanbul, part of the UNITAR network, participated in NADMEX 2024: Disaster Management Exhibition & Summit to engage with current approaches to disaster-risk management and identify opportunities for institutional cooperation. Through thematic sessions, professional exchanges and dialogue with stakeholders in the disaster-management field, the participation supported the circulation of knowledge concerning preparedness, risk reduction and emergency response.

Particular attention was given to the prevention of forest fires and the development of effective fire-management strategies. By emphasising anticipatory action, informed planning and coordination before disasters occur, CIFAL Istanbul's engagement contributed directly to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, especially efforts to reduce disaster-related human, environmental and social losses and strengthen the resilience of settlements.

The focus on wildfire prevention and environmental risk reduction also supported SDG 13: Climate Action and SDG 15: Life on Land. Engagement with disaster-management organisations and specialists further advanced SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals by creating opportunities for knowledge exchange and future cooperation.

Bahçeşehir University, CIFAL Istanbul, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, Bağcılar Municipality and VMI Consulting: Cross-Sectoral Collaboration on Digital Transformation and Leadership in Local Government



In the 2024-2025 academic year, “Digital Transformation and Leadership in Local Government” brought together Bahçeşehir University, CIFAL Istanbul, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, Bağcılar Municipality and VMI Consulting to explore digital change in local public services. Held at Bahçeşehir University’s Law Building Doctoral Hall, the event also involved the university’s Leadership and Entrepreneurship Club. Its cross-sectoral format provided a platform for connecting research and education with the practical organisational and technological challenges facing municipalities.

The programme connected higher education through Bahçeşehir University, the public sector through Bağcılar Municipality, private-sector cybersecurity expertise through VMI Consulting, and international sustainability training through CIFAL Istanbul and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research. This cross-sectoral partnership brought complementary perspectives to digital transformation and leadership, linking academic knowledge with municipal experience and technical expertise. The exchange offered an opportunity to consider how cooperation across sectors can strengthen institutional capacity and support the digital development of local government.

The event highlights Bahçeşehir University's role in facilitating cross-sectoral dialogue and knowledge exchange around public-sector challenges. It contributes primarily to SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals through cooperation between academic, public, private and international actors. Its focus on digital transformation also supports SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure. The initiative also makes a meaningful contribution to SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) by addressing the role of digital transformation and effective municipal leadership in building more inclusive, resilient, and sustainably managed cities. By connecting academic research, international expertise, cybersecurity knowledge, and practical municipal experience, the programme encouraged discussion on how digital technologies and institutional innovation can improve the accessibility, efficiency, and responsiveness of local public services. Its emphasis on strengthening municipal capacity and promoting knowledge exchange is particularly relevant to SDG Target 11.3, which calls for more inclusive and sustainable urbanization and improved capacity for participatory, integrated, and sustainable human settlement planning and management. Through this collaboration, Bahçeşehir University supported dialogue on how digitally capable local governments can better respond to evolving urban challenges and contribute to the long-term sustainability and well-being of the communities they serve.

From Trees to Innovation: BAU Podcast on the Future of Forestry and Timber

On 13 November 2025, Bahçeşehir University's Timber Structures Application and Research Center contributed to the public discussion on sustainable forestry and timber innovation through the podcast episode "From Trees to Innovation: The Future of Timber." The programme featured Dr. Demet Sürücü, a forest industry engineer and the founder and director of the BAU Center, and explored the technological transformation of forestry and the timber industry. Topics included data-driven forest inventories using satellite imagery, drones and artificial intelligence; innovations in engineered timber products; developments in timber markets; technological responses to climate change and forest fires; and emerging entrepreneurship opportunities within the sector.

The episode contributed to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by communicating the potential of engineered timber as a material for safer, lower-impact and more resilient built environments. Through its dedicated research center, Bahçeşehir University connects expertise in forestry, architecture and construction, helping to expand access to scientific and applied knowledge required for the responsible use of timber in urban development. The discussion therefore positioned timber innovation not only as an industrial issue but also as part of the transition towards ecological, disaster-resilient and liveable cities.

The programme also supported SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production by examining how digital monitoring, technological innovation and engineered wood products can improve decision-making across the forestry and timber value chain. Its focus on data-informed resource management encouraged a more responsible approach to sourcing, processing and using wood, while the discussion of new technologies and entrepreneurship highlighted opportunities to develop more efficient and sustainability-oriented production models.

Its strongest connection with SDG 15: Life on Land arose from the emphasis on sustainable forest management and technology-assisted ecosystem monitoring. Satellite imagery, drones and artificial intelligence can strengthen forest inventories, improve understanding of changing forest conditions and support earlier, better-informed responses to wildfire and climate-related risks. By sharing this specialist knowledge with a wider audience, Bahçeşehir University demonstrated how research, professional expertise and public communication can contribute to protecting forests while ensuring that timber use remains connected to the long-term health and responsible management of terrestrial ecosystems.



Fire-Resistant Timber Structures for Sustainable Cities



On 10 November 2025, Bahçeşehir University's Timber Structures Application and Research Center and Faculty of Architecture and Design organised the seminar "Fire and Fire-Resistant Timber Structures for Living in Sustainable Cities" at BAU's Beşiktaş South Campus. Bringing together architects, engineers, students, manufacturers and representatives of Finland-based Nordtreat, the event examined the future of timber construction, fire-safety standards and sustainable building solutions. It also addressed Türkiye's recently introduced regulation on the design, calculation and construction of timber buildings, highlighting its importance for the sector.

The programme contributed directly to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by advancing knowledge of safe, fire-resistant and sustainable timber buildings. Presentations covered fire testing, regulatory compliance and timber-construction practices from Finland, alongside international examples ranging from Australian fire stations to the renovation of the London Underground. Turkish projects such as the Çatalhöyük Visitor Centre and Sille Primary School further demonstrated how successful applications can increase the confidence of local authorities and encourage wider use of timber in the built environment.

The seminar supported SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production by focusing on bio-based fire-retardant solutions developed for different timber species. These technologies preserve the natural character of wood while improving its fire performance, demonstrating how material innovation and appropriate technical standards can enable timber to be used more safely, effectively and responsibly.





The event also related to SDG 15: Life on Land by connecting the future of timber construction with responsible use of forest-based resources. Through its specialised research center, Bahçeşehir University promoted an approach in which the expansion of timber construction must remain grounded in informed material selection, efficient use and the long-term sustainability of the forest ecosystems from which wood originates.

"Smart Material: Timber" at the Ecological Intelligence, Smart Materials and Nature's Digital Network Panel

Between 16-19 April 2025, Bahçeşehir University's Timber Structures Application and Research Center participated in the 47th Turkeybuild Istanbul, Türkiye's longest-running building exhibition and a major regional platform for the construction sector. As part of the "Ecological Intelligence, Smart Materials and Nature's Digital Network" panel, Center Director Demet Sürücü delivered a presentation titled "Smart Material: Timber" to architects, engineers and construction-industry representatives. The presentation addressed timber's inherent material intelligence, the measurement and use of its properties in industrial production and building systems, the objectives of the BAU Center, and innovative timber applications from around the world.

The participation contributed to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by bringing BAU's research-based knowledge on timber construction into direct dialogue with professionals shaping the built environment. Presenting timber as an advanced construction material encouraged wider consideration of ecological and technically informed solutions for more sustainable urban development.



It supported SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production by demonstrating how a natural material can be evaluated, engineered and used more effectively through measurable performance criteria and innovative production methods. The activity is also related to SDG 15: Life on Land by connecting innovation in the built environment with the responsible use of forest-based resources and the long-term sustainability of forest ecosystems.

The Lost Sea: Documenting the Aral Sea's Environmental Collapse and the Future of Water and Ecosystem Sustainability



Initiated in 2025, the Aral Sea Documentary Project is an international documentary production exploring one of the world's most significant environmental transformations: the dramatic shrinkage of the Aral Sea and its consequences for ecosystems, natural resources, and communities across Central Asia. Filmed in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan, the project examines the historical, environmental, social, and cultural dimensions of the Aral Sea crisis, bringing together perspectives from academics, environmental activists, government representatives, and local communities.

Once one of the world's largest inland lakes, the Aral Sea has undergone extensive environmental degradation, largely resulting from large-scale irrigation policies and the diversion of rivers during the Soviet era. Its transformation represents a striking example of the long-term consequences of unsustainable water resource management, demonstrating how decisions concerning agricultural production and natural resource use can profoundly affect ecosystems, biodiversity, and human livelihoods.

Beyond its environmental significance, the Aral Sea holds an important place in the historical and cultural identity of the peoples of Central Asia and the wider Turkic world. The documentary explores this relationship between people and their environment, examining how ecological transformation has reshaped local communities, cultural memory, and perceptions of the future.

Through interviews, field observations, and documentary storytelling, the project seeks to connect scientific knowledge with lived experiences, encouraging reflection on the environmental consequences of human activity and the importance of sustainable development policies.

The documentary establishes a particularly strong connection with SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) by examining the consequences of unsustainable water management and large-scale irrigation practices that contributed to the Aral Sea's dramatic decline.

By documenting the historical processes behind the depletion of the lake and their environmental and social consequences, the project highlights the importance of responsible water allocation, long-term resource planning, and integrated approaches to water management.

The Aral Sea crisis demonstrates that water sustainability extends beyond access to drinking water and sanitation. It also requires the protection of freshwater ecosystems, the responsible management of shared water resources, and consideration of the long-term environmental consequences of agricultural and economic development.

The documentary also contributes to awareness relevant to SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) by examining how the dramatic transformation of the Aral Sea has affected surrounding settlements, local livelihoods, cultural identity, and the relationship between communities and their natural environment.

For generations, the Aral Sea has shaped the social, economic, and cultural life of communities across Central Asia. Its decline represents not only an environmental crisis but also a profound transformation of the landscapes, traditions, and ways of life associated with the region.

Through interviews with local residents, academics, and public representatives, the documentary seeks to preserve community perspectives and cultural memory while exploring the challenges of maintaining resilient and sustainable settlements in environmentally vulnerable regions.

The project is particularly relevant to SDG Target 11.4, which promotes the protection and safeguarding of cultural and natural heritage. Its exploration of environmental degradation and the conditions affecting surrounding communities also connects to the broader objectives of creating safer, healthier, and more resilient human settlements.

By documenting the human and cultural consequences of ecological decline, the project highlights why sustainable communities depend not only on infrastructure and economic development but also on the long-term protection of the natural environments that sustain them.

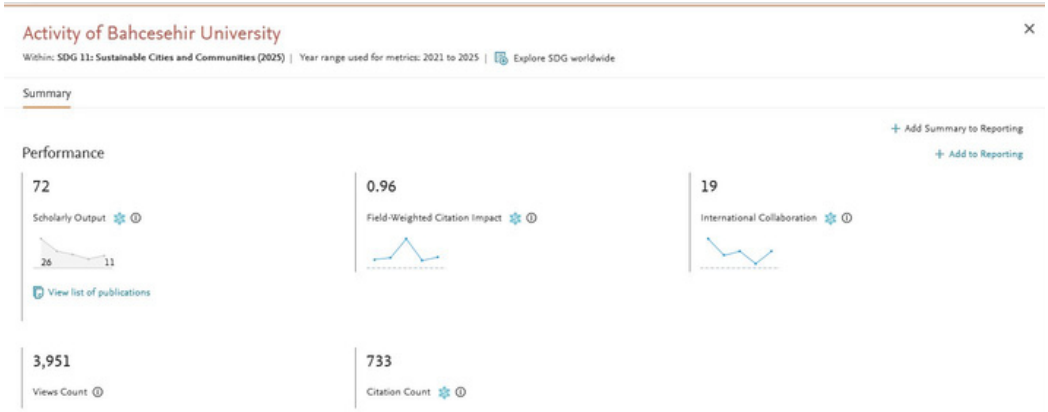


Bahçeşehir University's Research Performance in SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities (2021–2025)

According to SciVal data, Bahçeşehir University produced 72 publications classified under SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities during the 2021–2025 period. These publications achieved a Field-Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI) of 0.96, indicating citation performance close to the global average for comparable publications, adjusted for subject field, publication year and publication type.

The research output received 733 citations and recorded 3,951 views, reflecting its visibility within the academic community. These indicators highlight BAU's contribution to the scientific knowledge base relevant to sustainable cities and communities, providing resources for further investigation and informed discussion of inclusive, safe and resilient urban development.

The figure below presents SciVal's overview of Bahçeşehir University's research performance under SDG 11 for the 2021–2025 period, including scholarly output, citation impact, international collaboration and publication views.





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