

NAZARBAYEV UNIVERSITY

Report - 2024



PRESIDENT’S INTRODUCTION	4
OVERVIEW AND KEY ACHIEVEMENTS	5
Mission and Strategic Goals	5
Key Results of the Year (2024)	6
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE	8
Student Demographics	8
Faculty	11
RESEARCH EXCELLENCE	15
Research Activity	15
Publication Trends	16
Strategic Research Areas	18
Student Research Engagement	19
International Collaborations	19
Benchmarking	20
Competitive Positioning and Recognition	22
Internal Research Funding and Projects	22
Innovation and National Impact	22
Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	26
Research Infrastructure and Core Facilities	26
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW	27
Financial Indicators for 2022-2025	27
Change of Funding Sources in 2022-2025	28
State Educational Grant Funding Trends 2021–2025	29
Reduction of the Amount of the Educational Grant for 2021-2025	30
Income Structure in 2024 and 2025	31
Structure of Expenses in 2024	33
Expenses by Units in 2024	34
Capital Expenditures in 2024-2025	36
SOCIETAL IMPACT	38
External Partnerships and Societal Contributions	38
Education Quality and Stakeholder Satisfaction	39
Student and Alumni Satisfaction	41
FUTURE PROSPECTS AND PLANS	42
SUMMARY	43

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Faculty ranks	11
Table 2. National H-Index Ranking	16
Table 3. NU's research collaboration	20
Table 4. NU Financial indicators	27
Table 5. NU income in 2024-2025	31
Table 6. NU capital expenditures	36

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Enrollment 2023-2024	8
Figure 2. Gender Distribution	9
Figure 3. Degrees Conferred	10
Figure 4. Professionally Active NU Alumni Rate	10
Figure 5. Faculty gender distribution	11
Figure 6. Faculty by citizenship	12
Figure 7. Programs by School and level of study	13
Figure 8. Total number of publications	16
Figure 9. Publications in Q1 journals	17
Figure 10. FWCI in subject areas	17
Figure 11. Research areas	18
Figure 12. NU's international collaboration	20
Figure 13. Income structure in 2022-2025	28
Figure 14. Funding from state educational grants	29
Figure 15. An average grant per student for 2021-2025	30
Figure 16. Shares of NU income sources in 2024	32
Figure 17. Structure of NU expenses in 2024	33
Figure 18. Shares of expenses in a breakdown by NU units in 2024	34
Figure 19. Distribution of shares of expenses of NU Schools within academic units in 2024	35
Figure 20. Major asset classes of the material and technical supply and informatization for 2024	37



PRESIDENT'S INTRODUCTION



I welcome you to this annual report, outlining the achievements of our community of students, faculty, staff and stakeholders. It also marks my first full year at Nazarbayev University, this young and ambitious university that is combining world-class education and research with local and regional relevance.

The report provides an overview of NU's achievements during the 2023-2024 academic year, along with a financial summary for the 2024 fiscal year.

The 2023–2024 academic year marked a defining chapter in the evolution of Nazarbayev University. With a student population of 7,089, a faculty body of 522 scholars from around the world, internationally competitive teaching and research, NU continues to fulfill its mission as a model of academic excellence in Kazakhstan and Central Asia. In the 2023-2024 academic year, applications for student places were the highest in our history, reflecting our status as the premier higher education institution in Kazakhstan and the region.

Our global standing was reaffirmed with NU's continued placement in the 501-600 band in the prestigious, Times Higher Education World University Rankings, placing us first in Central Asia. With a Field-Weighted Citation Impact of 1.93 (a measure of research impact) and 60% of publications in journals in the top quartile for quality (for the years 2020-24, inclusive), NU is recognized not only for the volume but also the quality and impact of its research.

Equally important is our contribution to national transformation. From curricular models adopted by dozens of Kazakhstani institutions to the training of thousands of education leaders and policy influencers, NU's reach extends well beyond our campus. Student employability stands at 98%, a figure that any university would be proud of. Our graduates are leading in sectors as diverse as public policy, engineering, artificial intelligence, data science, physical sciences, education, and health sciences, while our alumni community now exceeds 10,000 strong.

These accomplishments reflect the collective efforts of our students, faculty, researchers, staff, the Board of Trustees, the Supreme Board of Trustees and our partners. They also reaffirm our founding vision: to build a university that upholds the highest standards of global competitiveness, academic integrity and societal responsibility.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to deepening our impact – through research that matters, education that empowers, and innovation that transforms.

This annual report provides an overview of achievements and key developments in 2024. As a public institution, it is important for us to demonstrate our value to the country. The report provides a window to NU's priorities and strategic achievements, including accounts of student demographics, faculty and research developments, societal contributions, quality assurance, and future plans. I hope that you will find the report of interest and value.

A group of graduates in black gowns and caps are celebrating, throwing their caps into the air. They are standing in front of a modern building with large glass windows. The scene is captured in a low-angle shot, making the graduates appear to be reaching towards the sky.

OVERVIEW AND KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



Mission and Strategic Goals

Vision:

To give Kazakhstan and the world the scientists, academics, managers, and entrepreneurs needed to prosper and develop.

Mission:

To be a model for higher education reform and modern research; to contribute to the establishment of Astana as an international knowledge, innovation, and medical hub; and to prepare students for a world of increased volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity.

Strategic priorities:

- 1 Higher education reform leadership
- 2 Academic excellence
- 3 Research excellence
- 4 A model for creating healthcare services
- 5 Innovation and translation of research into production

Key Results of the Year (2024)

Nazarbayev University (NU) is Kazakhstan's leading institution for higher education, research and innovation, playing a central role in the economic and social transformation of Central Asia. Since its establishment in 2011, NU has established itself as a leader in academic and research excellence, ranking in the top 24-29% of international research universities, according to the 2025 Times Higher Education World University Rankings (THE WUR).

With 7,089 students enrolled in more than 70 programs developed in collaboration with top global universities, NU has produced more than 10,000 graduates who are driving progress across key sectors of Kazakhstan's economy. The University's faculty includes over 500 scholars from nearly 60 countries, among them 35 of the world's top 2% most-cited researchers. This diverse and high achieving faculty body positions NU as a hub of intellectual capital, having contributed more than 9,000 research publications since our inception and cultivated impactful global partnerships.

NU's research shows significant growth in both quantity and quality, particularly in areas such as socio-economic transformation, artificial intelligence (AI), health, new materials, energy and the United National Sustainable Development Goals. Through its knowledge-sharing initiatives, NU is also playing a vital role in raising academic standards throughout Kazakhstan. Selected highlights of the year include:

- Ranked in the top 24–29% globally and top in Central Asia in the 2025 Times Higher Education World University Rankings (THE WUR);
- Student body of 7,089 students in more than 70 academic programs developed in collaboration with prestigious global partners;
- Graduated more than 10,000 students since inception, who contribute significantly to Kazakhstan's development and global innovation;
- Employability performance at sector leading level of above 98%;
- Faculty composed of over 500 scholars from nearly 60 countries, including 35 of the world's top 2% most-cited researchers;
- Through committed effort, one-third of faculty members are now of Kazakh origin (10% at the inception of the University);
- NU's research outputs reached 10,000, demonstrating substantial year on year growth in both volume and quality;
- 23 academic programs received or are undergoing international accreditation, ensuring global competitiveness and quality assurance;
- Nazarbayev University School of Medicine opens an Innovative Learning Center;
- The Institute of Smart Systems and Artificial Intelligence (ISSAI) launched KazLLM, the first Large Language Model in Kazakh language.



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE



NU is committed to developing and delivering high-quality, globally competitive and benchmarked academic programs, that prepare graduates to meet the needs of the national and global workforce and society; every program will equip our graduates with NU’s attributes. Diverse, innovative and modern learning and teaching modes will ensure NU’s talented students receive a stimulating and enriching experience, empowering them to reach their full academic and career potential.

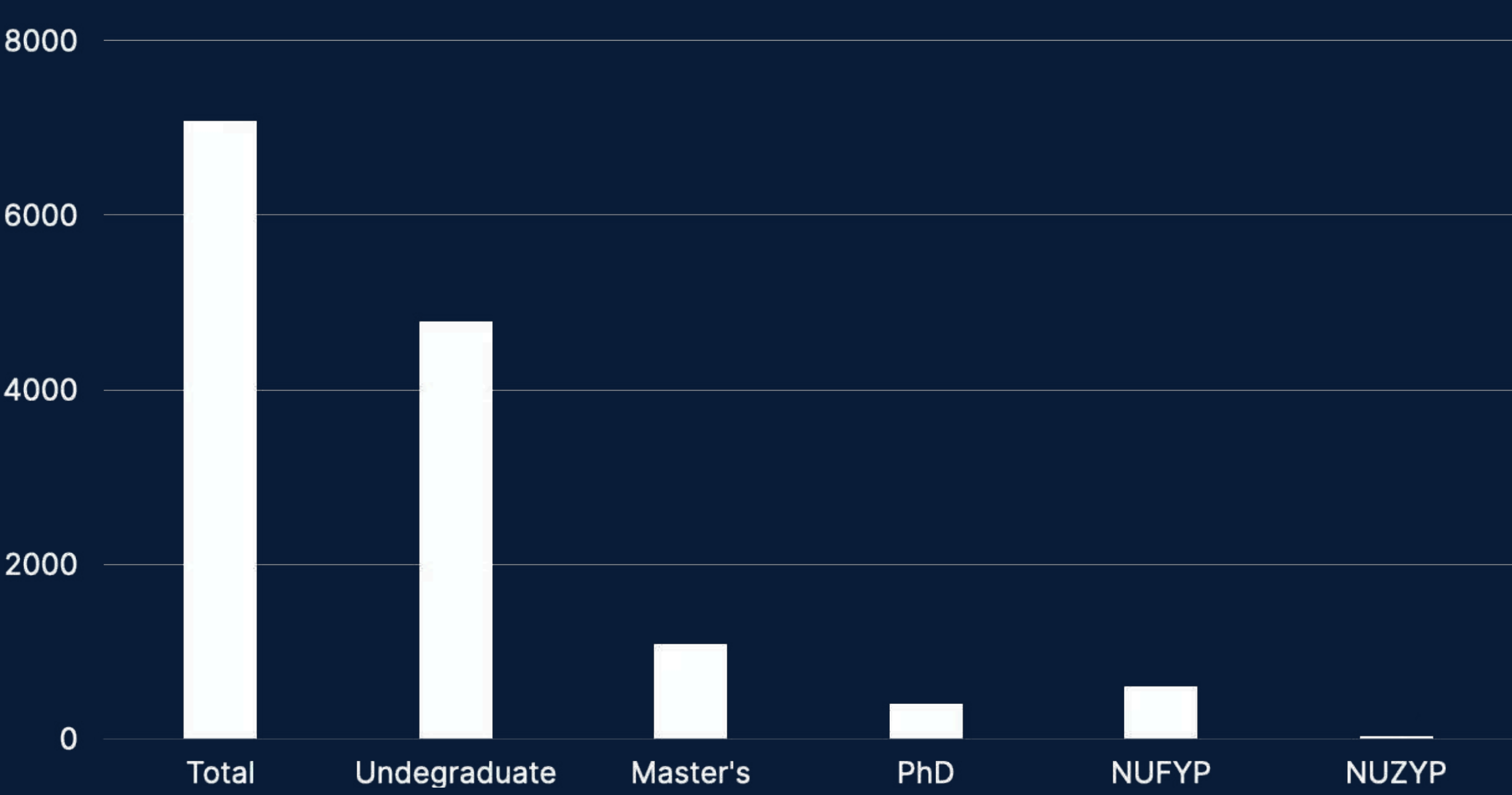
Student Demographics

Nazarbayev University attracts a diverse and talented student body, with students coming from across Kazakhstan and more than 30 countries around the world. Known for their exceptional academic abilities and ambition, NU students are equipped with knowledge and skills to make a meaningful impact in their fields. The University’s rigorous programs ensure that graduates are well-equipped with cutting-edge knowledge and possess a global perspective. Student are selected through a rigorous admissions process that ensures only the most promising candidates are admitted. Over the last 14 years, NU graduated over 10000 students who play leading roles in various industries, continue their education in leading universities around the globe, or run their own businesses both locally and globally.

Overall Student Population

In the 2023-2024 academic year, Nazarbayev University’s student population reached 7,089, comprising 4,790 undergraduate students, 1,652 graduate students, and 647 students of the Center for Preparatory Studies (CPS). This reflects continued steady growth across academic levels and disciplines.

Figure 1. Enrollment 2023-2024.



Citizenship and International Diversity

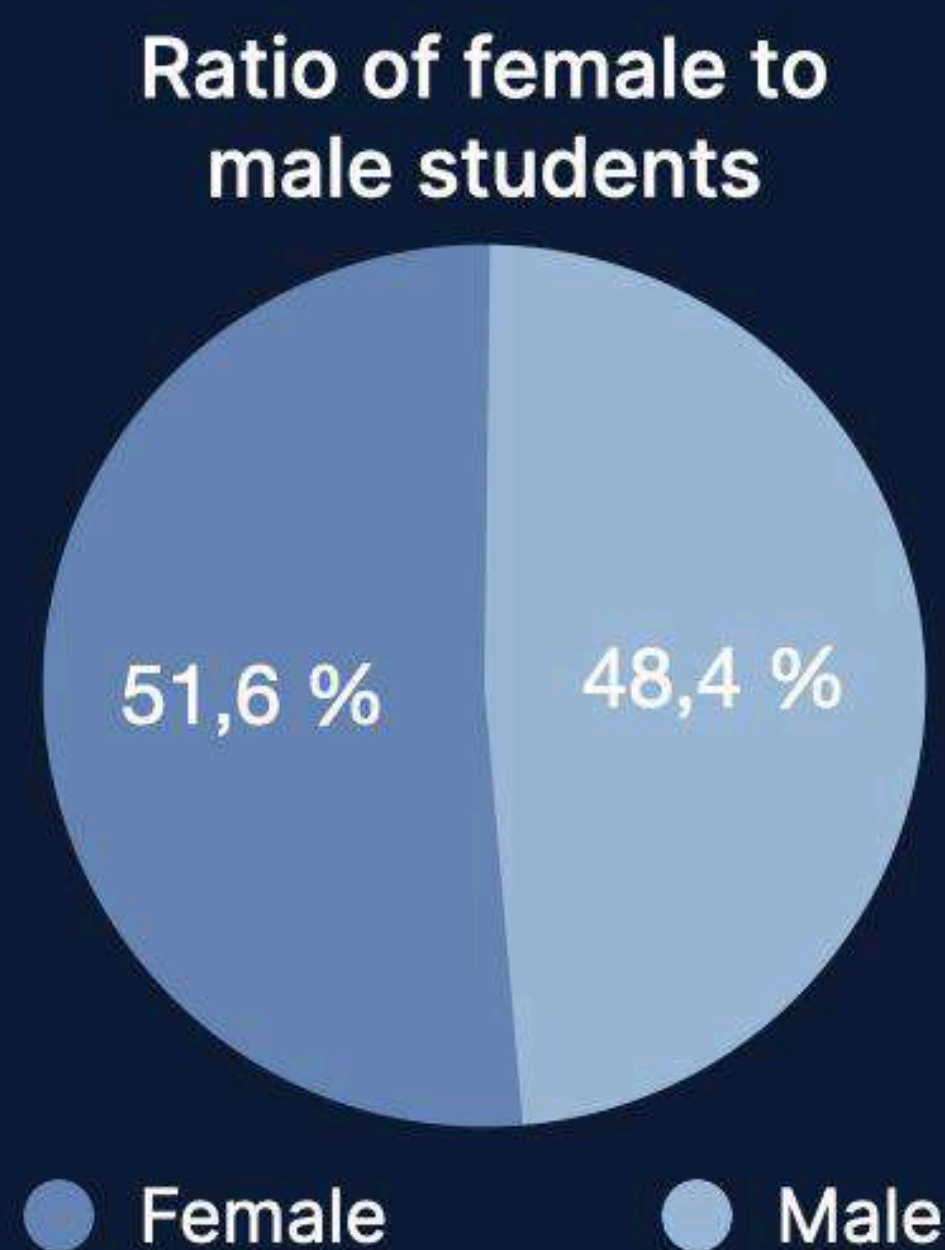
Students represent 32 countries, with international students making up 2.9% of the student body. The most represented countries among international students are Pakistan, Nigeria, China, Ghana, Russia, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Iran, and Mongolia.

Gender Distribution

NU maintains a balanced gender profile across its student population:

- Undergraduate: 51.9 % female, 48.1% male
- Graduate: 55.3% female, 44.7% male
- CPS: 40% female, 60% male
- Overall: 51.6% female, 48.4% male

Figure 2. Gender Distribution.



Regional Distribution

NU continues to attract students from all regions of Kazakhstan, with Almaty, Astana, and Shymkent among the most represented. This reflects NU’s nationwide accessibility and inclusive admission policies.

Age Profile

The average age of NU undergraduate students in the 2023-2024 AY remains 19.9 years, with first-year students averaging 18.6 years and fifth-year students averaging 22.7 years.

Degrees Conferred

Graduates have gone on to pursue careers in academia, entrepreneurship, the public sector, and international organizations. Many have continued their studies at globally recognized institutions such as Harvard, Oxford, and MIT, while others have launched successful ventures or joined organizations such as Google, BCG, and the UN.

Figure 3. Degrees Conferred.

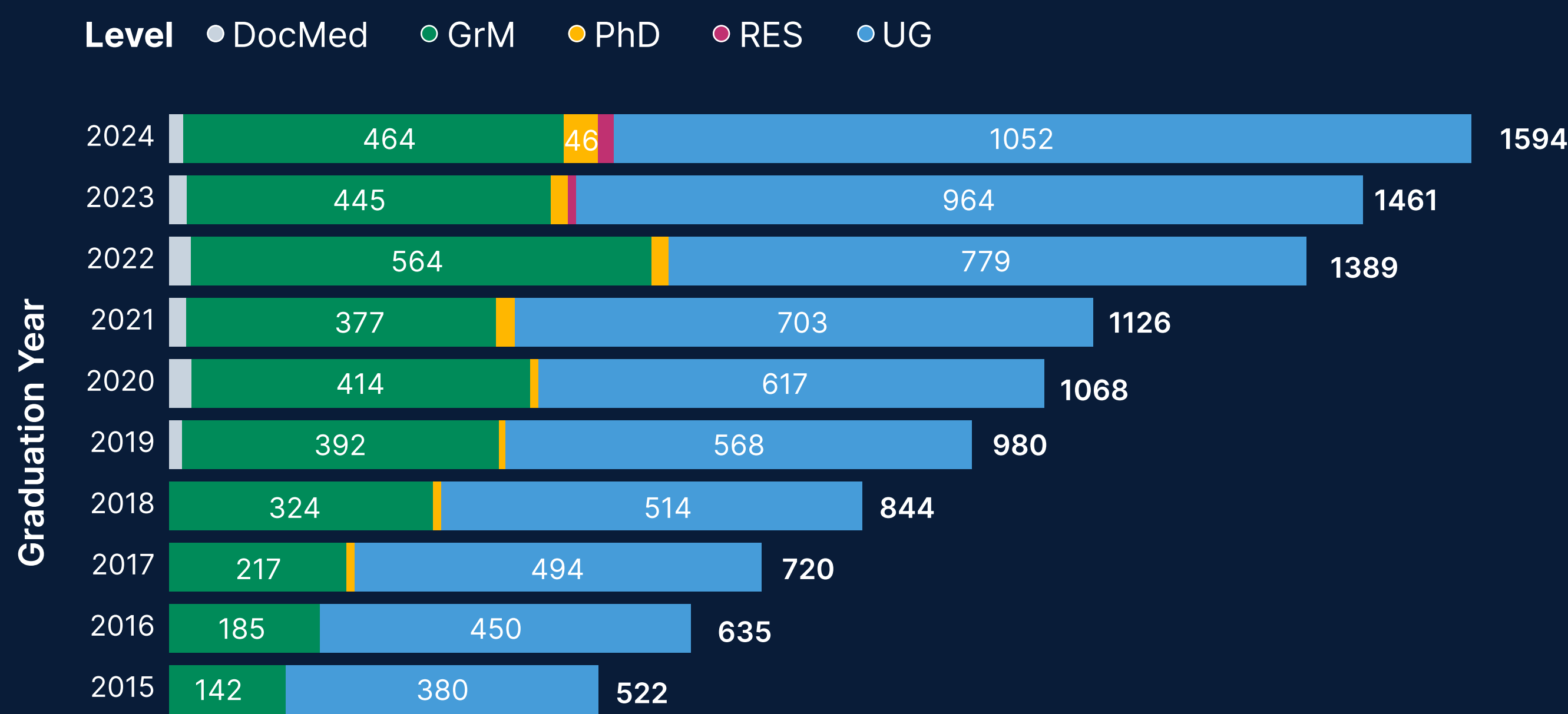


Figure 4. Professionally Active NU Alumni Rate.



The lower employability rates observed in the years 2020–2022 reflect the economic downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly impacted job markets globally. The data for 2024 graduates will only be available towards the end of 2025 and is therefore not included in this report.

Faculty

Academic Staff

NU employs over 500 faculty, comprising local experts and international scholars from nearly 60 countries. Faculty members hold terminal degrees from globally leading institutions, including 35 scholars listed among the Stanford University’s list of world’s top 2% most-cited researchers. Faculty members’ expertise reflects the disciplines in which we teach or undertake research, and their contributions are vital to NU's goals in education, research, and innovation. The university continues to attract top-tier talent through competitive hiring and retention packages.

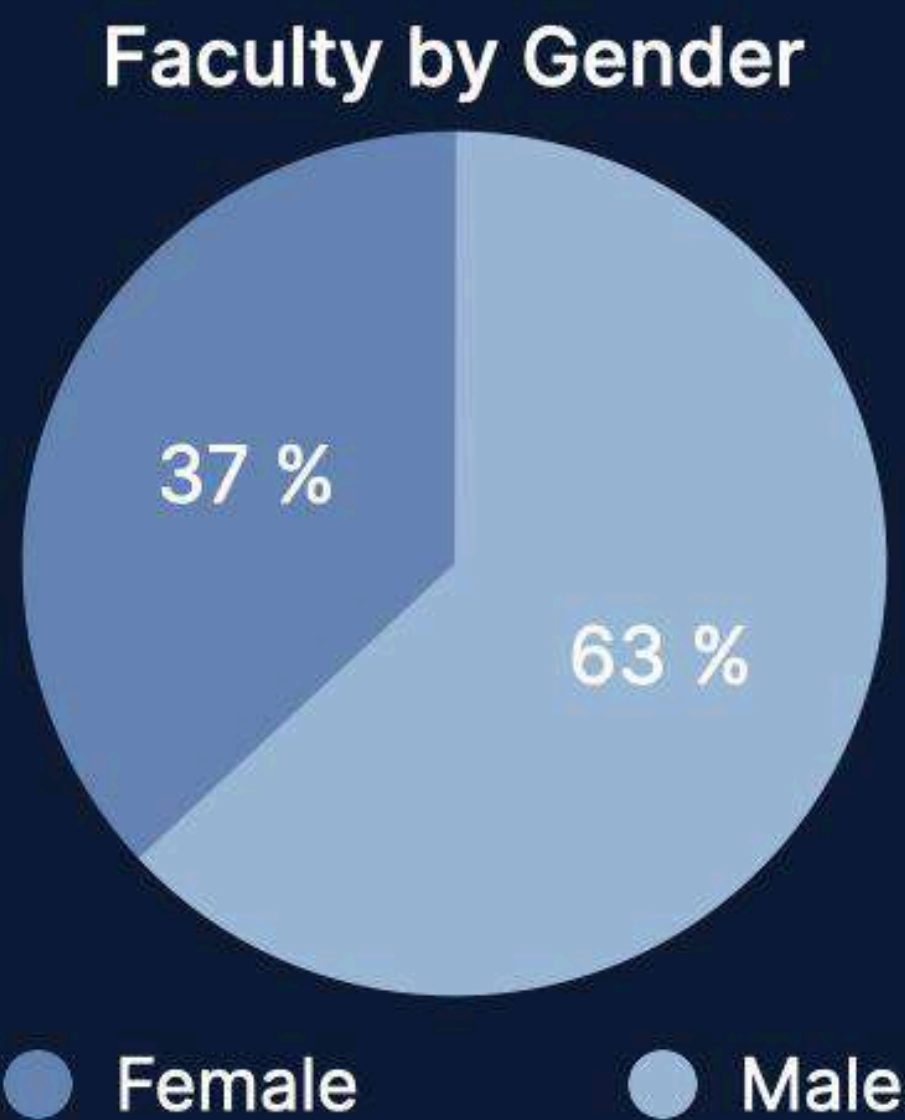
Table 1. Faculty ranks.

Rank	AY 2023-24
Professor	47
Associate Professor	123
Assistant Professor	160
Instructor	105
Postdoctoral Scholar	25
Teaching Fellow	57
Other	<5
Total	522

Gender Distribution

Among faculty members, 37% were women in the 2023-2024 AY. While gender parity has been nearly achieved in NU’s overall staff body (49.6% female), further efforts are needed to increase the proportion of females among faculty members, particularly in STEM-related fields.

Figure 5. Faculty gender distribution.



International Diversity

NU maintains a globally diverse faculty. In the 2023-2024 AY, 68.4% of faculty and teaching academic staff were international hires. This reflects our success in hiring and developing Kazakh origin faculty, whose representation increased from just under 20% in 2015 to circa 32% in 2024. The faculty body includes scholars from across North America, Europe, Asia, and the CIS region.

Figure 6. Faculty by citizenship.



Academic Programs

Overview of Academic Offerings

In the 2023-2024 AY, Nazarbayev University offered a diverse and robust set of academic programs at the undergraduate, master’s, doctoral, and professional levels. These programs are structured across the University’s specialized schools, aligning with its interdisciplinary approach and research-intensive mission. The academic portfolio spans the humanities, social sciences, engineering, digital sciences, education, mathematics, physical sciences, business, mining, medicine, and public policy – reflecting NU’s commitment to equipping students with subject knowledge and skills that are significant for the country and the region.

Undergraduate Programs

Undergraduate programs are primarily housed within the School of Sciences and Humanities (SSH), the School of Engineering and Digital Sciences (SEDS), and the School of Mining and Geosciences (SMG). In SSH, students can major in a variety of liberal arts and science fields, including biological sciences, chemistry, economics, mathematics, physics, anthropology, political science and international relations, sociology, and world languages, literature, and culture. SEDS offers technologically focused programs such as computer science, electrical and computer engineering, mechanical and aerospace engineering, robotics engineering, chemical and materials engineering, and civil and environmental engineering. Meanwhile, SMG provides specialized programs in geology, mining engineering, and petroleum engineering, preparing students for careers in Kazakhstan’s vital natural resource sectors.

Master’s Programs

NU's master’s programs are offered in all schools, with particularly strong enrollments in SEDS, the Graduate School of Education (GSE), and SSH. Within SEDS, students pursue advanced degrees in data science, engineering management, robotics, computer science, and civil and environmental engineering. GSE offers graduate-level programs in educational leadership and multilingual education, continuing its focus on educational reform and innovation. SSH’s graduate offerings include applied mathematics, physics, political science and international relations, and Eurasian studies. The Graduate School of Business (GSB) provides programs tailored to executive and managerial development, such as the Master of Business Administration (MBA), Executive MBA (EMBA), and a master’s in finance. The Graduate School of Public Policy (GSPP) maintains its relevance with programs in public policy and public administration.

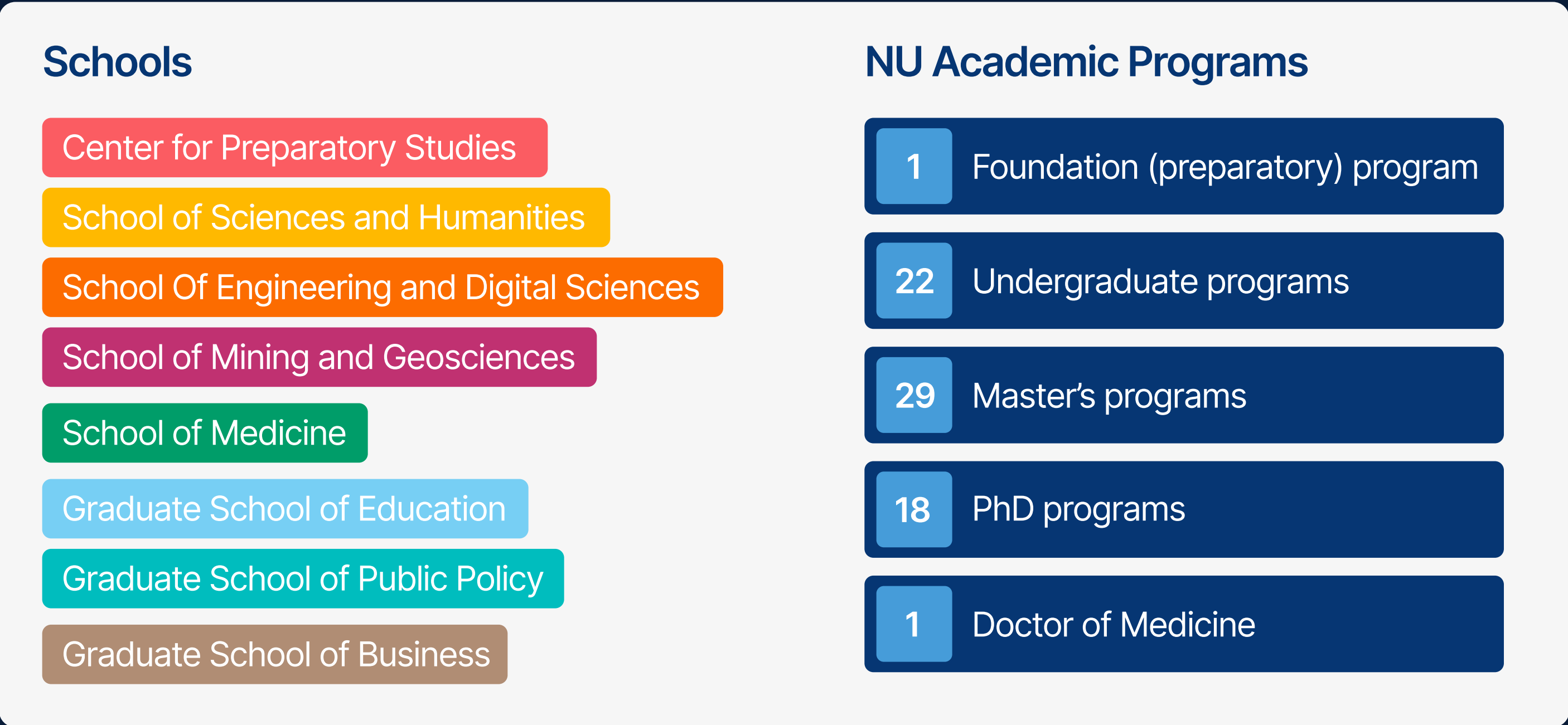
Doctoral Programs

Doctoral education at NU continued to expand in 2024, particularly in fields critical to national development and to addressing global challenges. In SEDS, students enrolled in PhD programs in computer science, robotics, chemical engineering, and mechanical engineering. GSE sustained its contribution to educational research through its PhD in education, while GSB offered a doctoral program in business administration. GSPP added to the policy research agenda with its PhD in public policy. In the School of Medicine, doctoral students pursued advanced study in biomedical sciences, global health, and pharmacology and toxicology, strengthening NU’s contribution to health sciences and translational medicine.

Medical and Professional Programs

The School of Medicine offered a suite of programs, including the Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree and an array of residency specializations. These included family medicine, general surgery, pediatrics, psychiatry, and sports medicine. Master's-level training in public health and sports medicine was also available. Doctoral-level research programs in the School of Medicine included the PhD in biomedical sciences and the PhD in global health. The residency program continued to serve as a critical training pathway for clinical specialists across Kazakhstan, with clinical rotations and mentorship provided through NU’s University Medical Center system.

Figure 7. Programs by School and level of study.







RESEARCH EXCELLENCE



NU is committed to producing globally competitive research that advances disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge, addresses regional and global challenges, and supports the development of society and economy. To achieve this, NU provides a supportive, stimulating, impact-focused research environment, that attracts and retains research-active faculty, and engages doctoral, master's and bachelor's students in research and innovation. Our research practice upholds the highest standards of integrity and values and encourages collaboration and interdisciplinarity. NU maintains the world-class infrastructure necessary to support research excellence and deliver outcomes with societal impact and global relevance.

Research Activity











In 2024, Nazarbayev University continued to assert its leadership as Kazakhstan's premier research institution. The total number of publications indexed in Scopus since our inception rose to 9,411, more than doubling from 2020 (4,560). Of these, 4,266 were published in Q1 journals (top 25%), accounting for nearly one-third of all Q1 publications from Kazakhstan between 2011 and 2024. Our in year publications for 2024 represent one-sixth of all scientific outputs in Kazakhstan for the year.

NU's research landscape in 2024 was marked by exceptional growth:

- Over 1,400 peer-reviewed publications, primarily in top-tier Scopus and Web of Science journals;
- 83 research grants totaling 6.5 billion KZT, 58% of which came from external sources;
- Strategic focus on AI, sustainable energy, biomedicine, materials science, and societal innovation, areas of significant importance to Kazakhstan and Central Asia;
- Active commercialization efforts with 45 projects, 12 patent applications, and 6 licensed technologies;
- Nazarbayev University Ranked First in Kazakhstan's National H-Index Ranking.

Nazarbayev University secured the top position among Kazakhstani institutions in the updated 2024 National H-Index Ranking of Kazakhstan. This ranking is an independent international assessment aimed at measuring the scientific productivity of individual researchers, research groups, and organizations in Kazakhstan. The evaluation is based on a consolidated Hirsch index (H-index).

Table 2. National H-Index Ranking.

Organization	Position ↓↑	National H- index(difference)	H-index (Scopus) ↓↑	H-index (WoS) ↓↑	H-index (Google Scholar) ↓↑
SCIENTIFIC POTENTIAL LEADERS					
 Nazarbayev University	1 (0)	119 (+8)	120	108	260
 Al Farabi Kazakh National University	2 (0)	80 (+6)	88	84	137
 L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University	3 (0)	76 (+4)	77	77	145
 Satbayev University	4 (0)	53 (+3)	67	39	106
 Kazakh National Medical University	5 (0)	50 (+6)	59	53	75
 Al Farabi Kazakh National University, Center of Physical-Chemical Methods of Research and Analysis	6 (0)	41 (+3)	28	84	20
 Institute of Nuclear Physics, National Nuclear Center of the Republic of Kazakhstan	7 (0)	38 (+2)	47	53	25
 Kazakh-British Technical University	8 (0)	37 (+3)	46	42	46
 KIMEP University	9 (0)	35 (+2)	43	35	53
 Institute of Physics and Technology Kazakhstan	10 (0)	31 (0)	46	44	7

Publication Trends

In 2020, the total cumulative number of the University’s scientific publications indexed in the Scopus database was 4,560. By 2024, this number more than doubled to 9,411 (as of December 17, 2024). This accounts for one-sixth of the total number of scientific publications in Kazakhstan during the same period, which amounted to 58,798 articles.

A similar trend is observed in publications in Q1 journals (the top 25% of prestigious journals according to Scopus). In 2020, there were 1,730 such articles, while in 2024 the number increased to 4,266. For comparison, the total number of Q1 publications by all Kazakhstani institutions from 2011 to 2024 is 13,486. This means that every third Q1 article published in Kazakhstan is co-authored by professors and researchers from the University. Graphs 8 and 9 below, provide these trend data in greater detail.

Figure 8. Total number of publications.

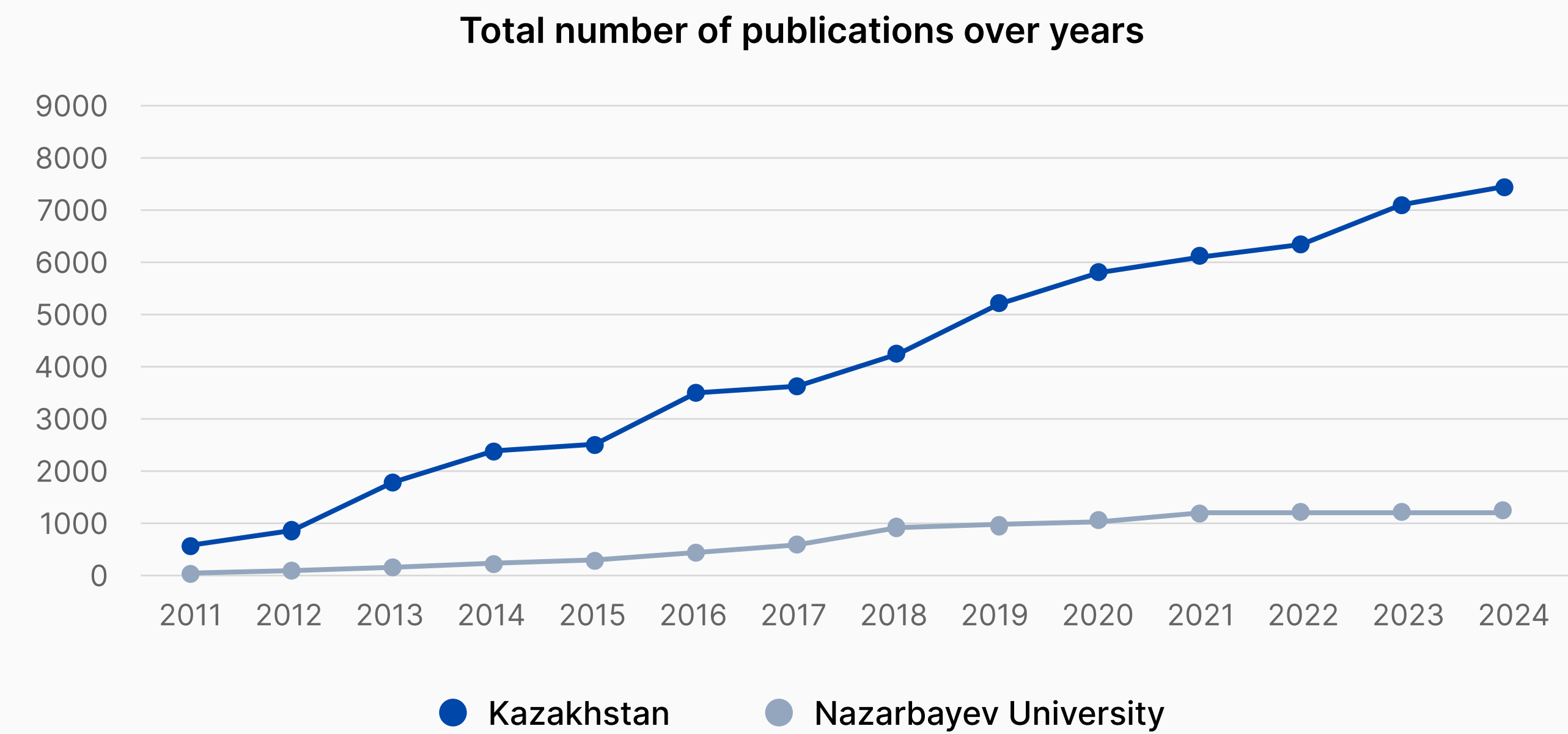
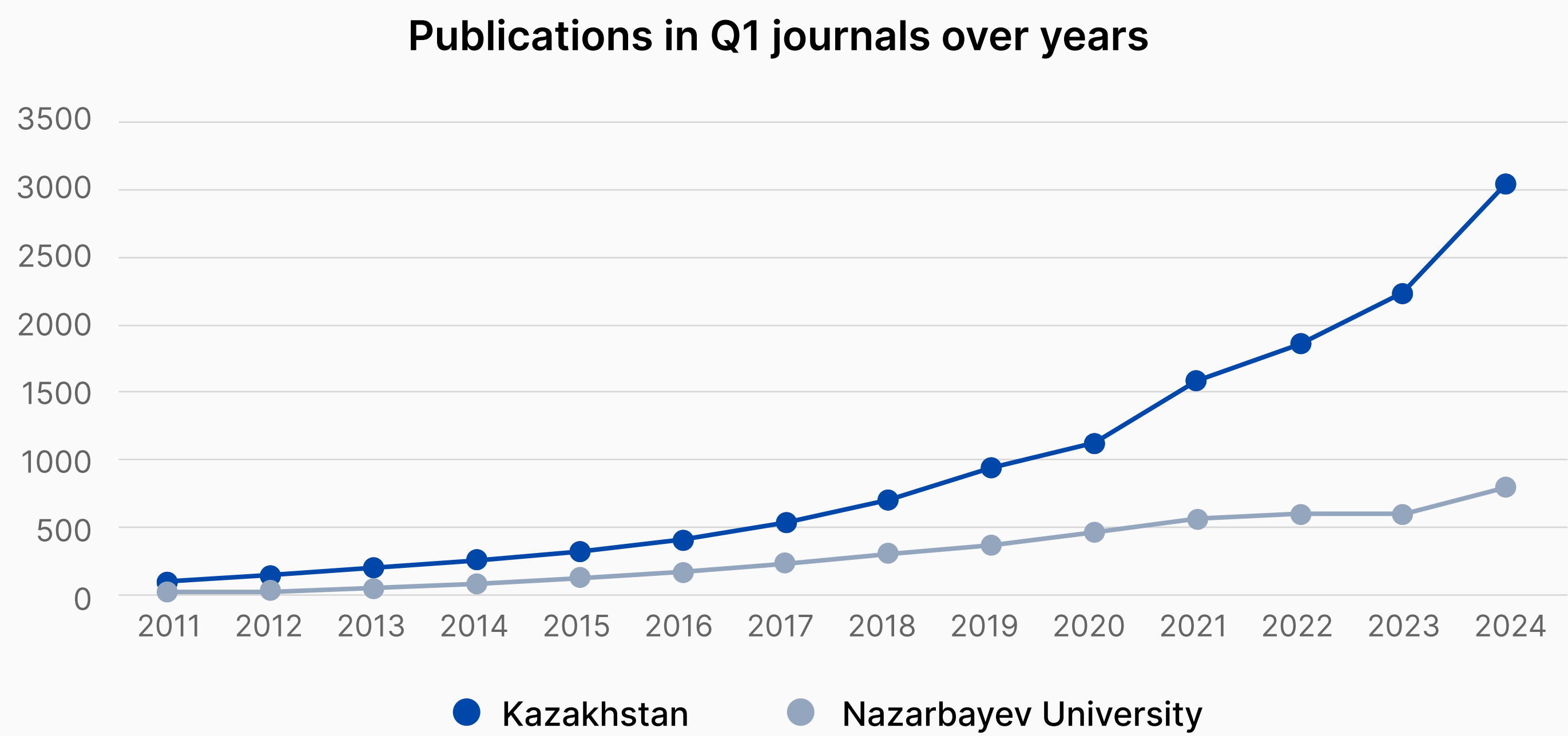


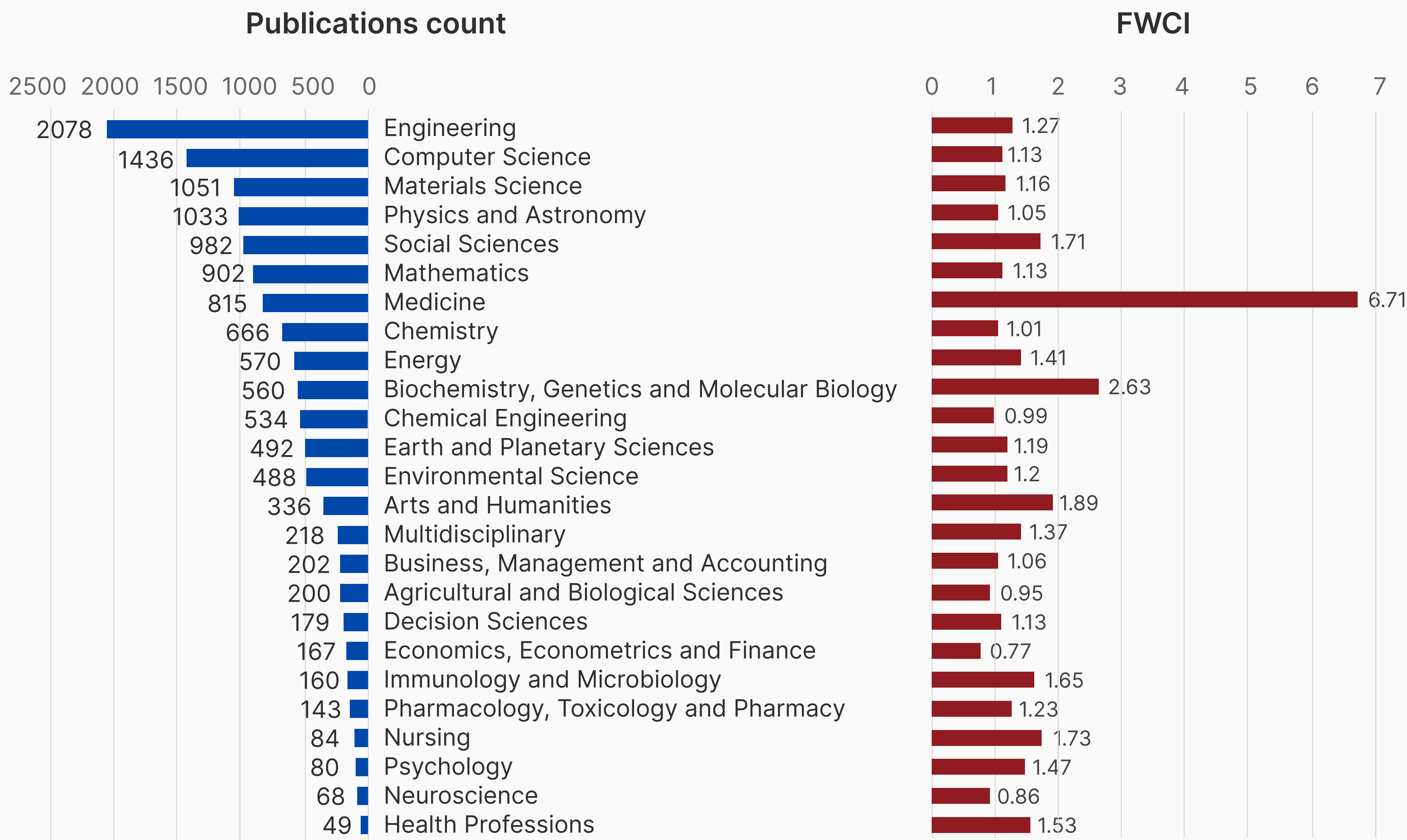
Figure 9. Publications in Q1 journals.



The university’s Field-Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI), a measure of research influence, reached 1.98, the highest among all Kazakhstani institutions, significantly exceeding the global average (1.0). This impact metric is on par with world’s elite universities, including our partner institutions such as Duke University and the National University of Singapore.

Graph 10 below provides details of volume and FWCI for various subject categories. It shows that while at an institutional level, our FWCI is commendable, it varies between subjects and we have to address the relatively low FWCI in some subject areas.

Figure 10. FWCI in subject areas.



Strategic Research Areas

NU's research activity spans both fundamental and applied sciences, with strategic emphasis on five priority areas:

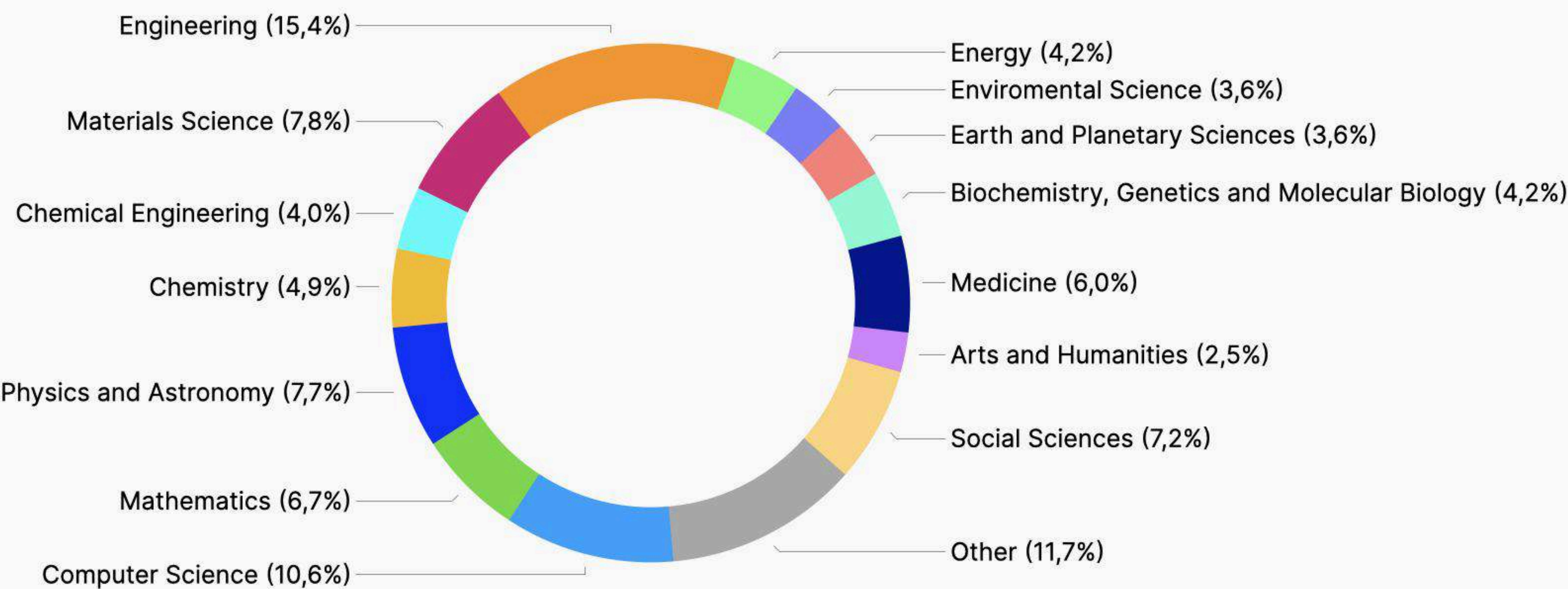
- Socio-economic transformation;
- Artificial Intelligence: The Institute of Smart Systems and Artificial Intelligence (ISSAI) at NU achieved significant milestones in 2024, reinforcing its role as a leading center for AI research and innovation in Kazakhstan. ISSAI's efforts have significantly advanced AI research, education, and application in Kazakhstan, positioning the institute as a central figure in the nation's digital transformation;
- Health and Wellbeing;
- Advanced Materials and Technologies;
- Energy and Environment.

According to SciVal analytics, the most productive disciplines were:

- Engineering;
- Computer Science;
- Materials Science;
- Physics and Astronomy;
- Social Sciences;
- Medicine.

The figure 11 below provides an illustration of volume of research activity by subject areas.

Figure 11. Research areas.



Professor Atakan Varol with President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, His Excellency Kassym-Jomart Tokayev.



The photograph shows Prof Atakan Varol with President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, His Excellency Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, in December 2024, at the launch of KazLLM, the first large language model for Kazakh language, developed at our Institute of Smart Systems and Artificial Intelligence (ISSAI).

Student Research Engagement

Student participation in research continues to grow; NU is a leader among universities in involving students in research projects. In the year 2024, 251 publications were co-authored by NU students, 70% of which appeared in Q1 journals. The majority of student authors were PhD candidates (50%), followed by master’s (28%) and undergraduate students (15% - primarily in their final year), followed by MD students (4%) and residency students (3%). Half of the student-authored publications came from the School of Engineering and Digital Sciences (51%).

International Collaborations

The share of publications coauthored with international collaborators accounts for 64.5% of all publications indexed in the Scopus database. The overall Field-Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI) for these collaborations is 2.26, which means that these works are cited more than twice as often compared to the global average for similar research. This indicator reflects the high recognition and impact of collaborative work and highlights the success of the university's international research cooperation strategy. Additionally, 10% of our publications are co-authored with colleagues from other Kazakh universities. Table 3 provides further details.

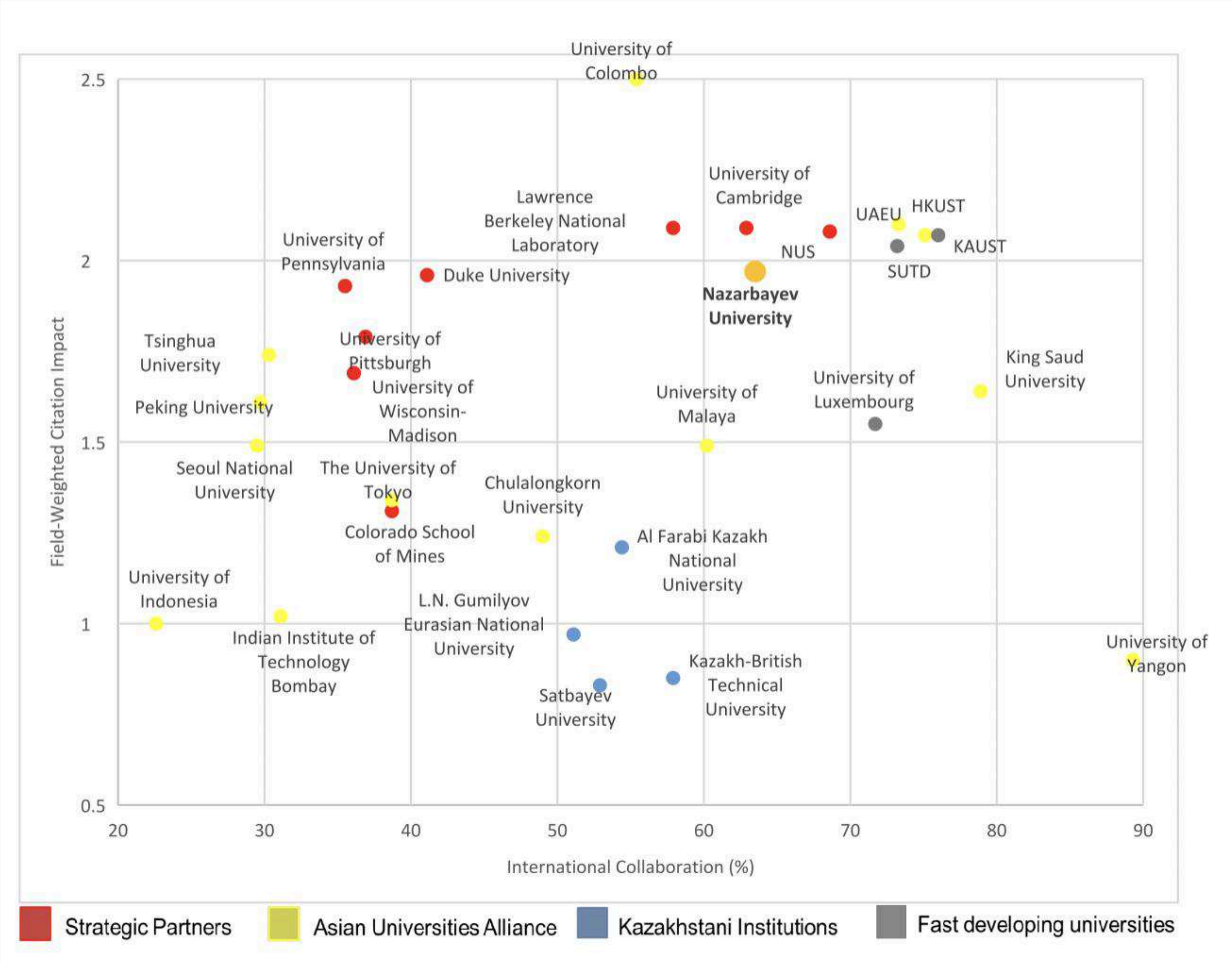
Table 3. NU’s research collaboration.

Metric	Rate	Publications count	Citations	Citations per Publication	FWCI
International collaboration	64.5%	4420	71294	16.1	2.26
Only national collaboration	10%	685	4738	6.9	0.96
Only institutional collaboration	18.2%	1251	11147	8.9	1.37
Single authorship (no collaboration)	7.3%	498	2034	4.1	1.13

Benchmarking

Achieving high competitiveness requires an understanding of the global research landscape and an evaluation of Nazarbayev University's performance in comparison with international peers. The graph below is based on benchmarking analysis from 2020 to 2024, which assesses the University's position in terms of the Field-Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI) and level of international collaboration (%) relative to its strategic partners, members of the Asian Universities Alliance, rapidly developing institutions, and other leading educational institutions in Kazakhstan. It confirms that NU's FWCI is internationally competitive and potentially benefits from our history of international research collaboration.

Figure 12. NU's international collaboration.





Competitive Positioning and Recognition

In the 2025 Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings (published in October 2024), NU retained its position in the 501-600 band, placing it among the top 24-29% of global research universities. Within Kazakhstan, NU ranks first in both research volume and quality, and fifth among universities in the CIS region. It also topped the 2024 Kazakhstan National H-index Ranking.

Moreover, 35 NU professors were listed among the top 2% most-cited scientists globally (more than any other Central Asian university), according to Stanford University’s global ranking. These scholars span domains such as nanotechnology, public health, energy, computer science, molecular biology, engineering and the social sciences.

NU’s standing in Times Higher rankings.



Internal Research Funding and Projects

In 2024, NU supported 91 research projects, made up as follows:

- 37 were new faculty-led research projects under our 2024–2026 internal grant program;
- 8 projects focused on AI-related problems;
- 46 collaborative research projects were approved for funding following international peer review.

These projects cover topics such as climate modeling, mining sustainability, educational reform, quantum materials, and advanced robotics.

Innovation and National Impact

In 2024, the School of Medicine opened Kazakhstan’s first diagnostic simulation center in partnership with Roche Diagnostics and the Ministry of Health. NU’s ISSAI Institute unveiled KazLLM, a large language model trained in Kazakh, Russian, Turkish and English, providing a national resource that is currently in use in government departments.

Additionally, the Nazarbayev University Research Centre on Entrepreneurship (NURCE) was recognized by Kazakhstan’s Ministry of Trade for its contributions to advancing women’s entrepreneurship, reflecting the broader societal impact of NU’s research ecosystem.

Nazarbayev University is committed to generating impactful research that addresses national priorities and contributes to Kazakhstan’s economic development and innovation ecosystem. Through the commercialization of research outcomes, the University plays a key role in translating scientific discoveries into real-world applications, fostering industry collaboration, and supporting the growth of knowledge-based sectors. Below are selected projects that exemplify NU’s contributions to research-driven innovation and economic impact:

KazLLM

The Institute of Smart Systems and Artificial Intelligence (ISSAI) has developed a large language model, ISSAI KAZ-LLM, to enable Kazakhstan to benefit from the advancements in generative AI for improving quality of life and fostering economic development.

ISSAI KAZ-LLM is designed to generate content in the three most relevant languages for Kazakhstan – Kazakh, Russian, and English – with additional support for Turkish as a representative of the Turkic language group. This initiative aims to serve all sectors of Kazakhstani society and the economy by addressing needs through personalized AI technologies.

Importantly, the model also contributes to preserving and promoting Kazakhstan’s cultural heritage by incorporating cultural perspectives, historical contexts, and specialized knowledge that reflect the country's unique identity. Through these efforts, ISSAI KAZ-LLM demonstrates how national AI projects can overcome language barriers while making meaningful contributions to the development of the global AI ecosystem.



Production of Materials for Lithium-Ion Batteries

This project aims to establish a pilot production facility for cathode material precursors using domestically sourced nickel, cobalt, and manganese. It holds strategic significance in reducing Kazakhstan’s dependency on imported battery materials, supporting the transition to clean energy, and contributing to economic diversification through high-tech manufacturing and exports. The technology has been developed, international scientific partnerships established, and negotiations with foreign producers initiated. A phased plan for infrastructure development, testing, and scaling is in place, in collaboration with relevant government agencies and industrial players.



IntelliWatch – AI-Based Monitoring System for Electric Motors and Generators

The project develops an AI-based system for predictive monitoring and maintenance of electric motors, generators, and transformers. It allows for early fault detection, vibration and acoustic analysis, and load prediction, thereby enhancing industrial asset efficiency and reducing downtime. A prototype is operational on the Nazarbayev University campus, and agreements for pilot trials with industrial partners have been signed. A production line for 20–30 monitoring devices is planned, and further engagement from energy and mining sectors is anticipated.



CodiPlay – B2G Solution for Teaching Programming in Schools

CodiPlay is a government-facing digital education solution that enables school students to learn programming on mobile devices. It plays a transformative role in modernizing the national education system and reducing the digital divide across regions. The platform is used in over 300 schools across 10 countries, with support from UNICEF and the Kazakh Academy of Education.

It has trained over 1,200 teachers and continues expanding regionally through strategic partnerships with local governments, education departments, and central ministries to ensure alignment with national education priorities.



A-GEAR “Astana Gait” Exoskeleton for Advanced Rehabilitation

The A-GEAR exoskeleton is designed to support the rehabilitation of people with mobility impairments, including post-stroke and cerebral palsy cases. Lighter and more adaptive than international analogs, it is three times more cost-effective and conforms to natural human movement. Clinical trials have been conducted in Kazakhstan, and regulatory registration is underway. Production is set to launch in early 2025, supported by partnerships with medical distributors and science funding organizations. The project also maintains research collaborations with top institutions in the US, UK, and Australia.



ALEM – Normothermic Organ Preservation and Transport System

ALEM focuses on developing a normothermic system for preserving and transporting donor organs, allowing for diagnosis, treatment, and potential modification prior to transplantation. The technology addresses a critical need in Kazakhstan’s healthcare system, supporting local transplantation capabilities and reducing dependence on imports. The project has secured medical manufacturing licenses and ISO certification, with clinical testing and production planned for 2025–2026. The solution will be presented at EXPO 2025 in Osaka as part of Kazakhstan’s health innovation showcase.



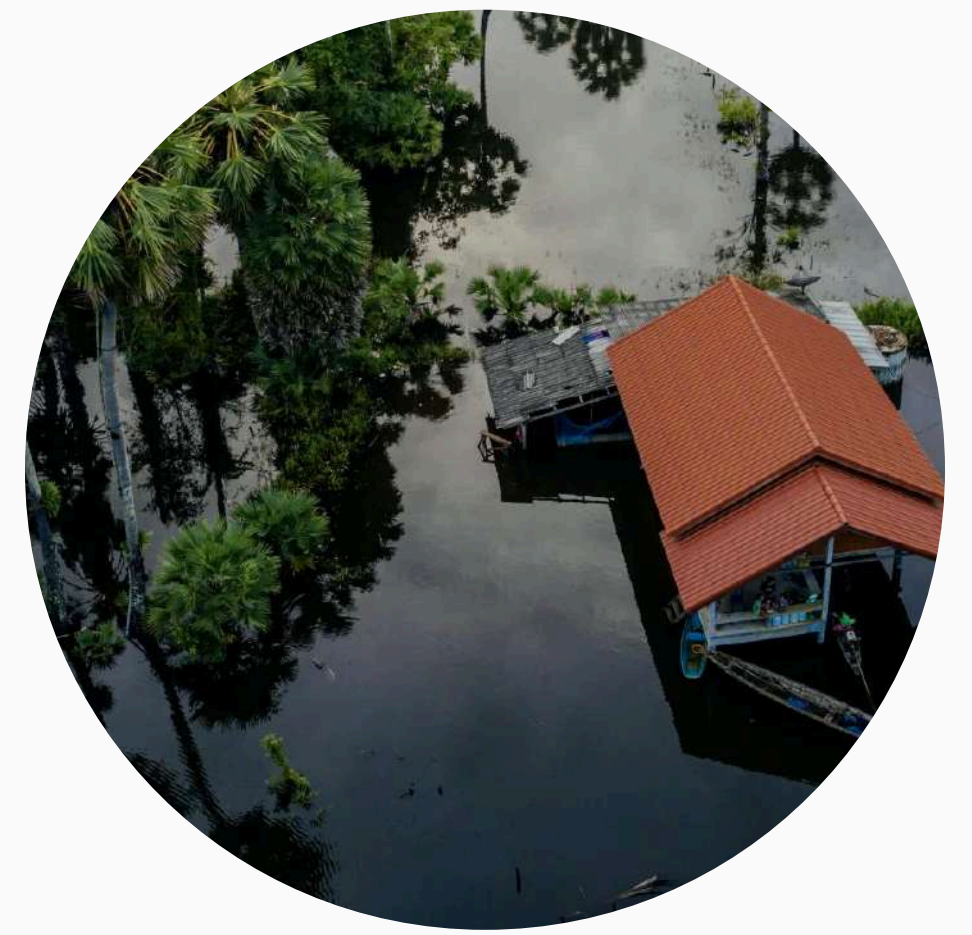
SmartView Innovations – Enhancing Heap Leaching Efficiency

This mining-sector startup provides an automated monitoring system for wobbler performance during heap leaching, significantly improving gold recovery rates, labor efficiency, and worker safety. One pilot project has been completed, and another is underway with a major mining firm in Turkestan. The company plans to expand regionally and enter foreign markets through a subscription-based model. With a market potential of \$42 million across six countries, the solution is positioned for international commercialization.



SUDS and AI-Based Flood Risk Monitoring and Mitigation System

This project proposes a multifunctional approach to urban water management using nature-based solutions and artificial intelligence to reduce flood risks, ensure water security, and support biodiversity. A pilot is being developed in Nazarbayev University's Science Park with German partners, incorporating simulation models and AI-driven monitoring. Future stages include construction of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), monitoring of surface and groundwater flows, and satellite-based topographic and groundwater modeling to support climate resilience in Kazakhstan's urban environments.



Development of a Domestic Anti-Cancer Drug

The project seeks to develop a novel anti-cancer therapy that targets KRAS-mutant tumor cells through induced glucose-dependent oxidative stress – a mechanism for which no effective treatment currently exists. Clinical trials in Phases I and II have shown promising stabilization of disease in all participants, with tumor size reduction in one case. Supported by state research grants, the project is progressing toward full-scale clinical trials, localization of component production, and potential international market entry by 2027.



IHT Central Asia – Kazakhstan-Spain Medical Device Manufacturing Joint Venture

This Kazakh-Spanish joint venture successfully launched the production of coronary stents and balloons in 2023, achieving all necessary licenses and quality certifications. With over 2,000 devices manufactured, the company is expanding into new product lines such as surgical sutures. Plans include establishing an R&D center with NURIS (Nazarbayev University Research and Innovation System) and entering regional markets in Central Asia. The initiative supports Kazakhstan's health innovation ecosystem while optimizing public procurement and enhancing domestic industry capabilities.



Quantum Technologies Laboratory – Development of Quantum Computing Infrastructure

The Quantum Technologies Laboratory project aims to position Nazarbayev University as a national leader in quantum science by developing foundational infrastructure for quantum computing and communications. It focuses on applied research in quantum algorithms, encryption methods, and scalable hardware solutions. The project includes partnerships with international academic and industry players, training of high-level specialists, and pilot applications in data security and scientific modeling. Long-term goals include technology transfer, establishment of a quantum research ecosystem in Kazakhstan, and contributions to national technological sovereignty in the post-digital era.

Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

NU aligns its research with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In 2011-2024, 35% of all NU publications addressed one or more SDGs. The most represented goals were:

- SDG 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing) – 1,115 publications;
- SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) – 1,031 publications;
- SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) – 428 publications.

These figures demonstrate NU's commitment to global challenges and its contribution to sustainable progress.

Research Infrastructure and Core Facilities

NU's infrastructure for high-impact research has grown rapidly. The University has well over a hundred dedicated research laboratories, in addition to laboratories used for teaching. Among these is the world class 'core research facility', supporting highly specialized research resource for engineering, computer science and physical sciences. In relation to this 'core facility':

- Since 2018, the number of primary research instruments increased from 25 to 77;
- NU now operates 23 specialized laboratories across four major areas: electron microscopy, analytical chemistry, materials science, and biotechnology;
- In 2023 alone, the system processed 7,962 research equipment requests, serving 410 unique users;
- NU's Nanofabrication Facility, launched in 2022, is the first ISO 6 Cleanroom Nanolab in Kazakhstan, enabling pioneering work in micro/nano-systems and advanced materials.



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



Financial Indicators for 2022-2025

According to NU’s internal regulatory documents budgeting horizon starts on January 1 and ends on December 31 of the corresponding year.

The financial result for 2024 was a positive 3.7 billion tenge, as indicated in Table 4. Projections of 2025 are provided for information.

Table 4. NU Financial indicators

	2022	2023	2024*	2025
	actual	actual	operational*	budget
Income, in million tenge	80 873	78 632	83 008	82 741
<i>in million \$</i>	175	172	177	171
Expences, in million tenge	83 525	92 721	79 357	81 882
<i>in million \$</i>	181	203	170	169
Financial result, in million tenge	-2 651	-14 089	3 651	859
<i>in million \$</i>	-6	-31	7	2

* - operational data for 2024

Key points of Table 4:

By the end of 2022, the financial result was negative, amounting to -2.6 billion tenge, which increased to -14.1 billion tenge by the end of 2023. However, in 2024, several strategic steps were taken, including a 15% reduction in expenses, which allowed NU to achieve a positive result of 3.7 billion tenge.

Total income is gradually increasing. In 2022, income amounted to 80.9 billion tenge. In 2024 this indicator reached 83 billion tenge, an increase of 2.6%.

In 2024, management took measures for financial recovery, reducing expenses to 79.4 billion tenge (a 15% reduction).

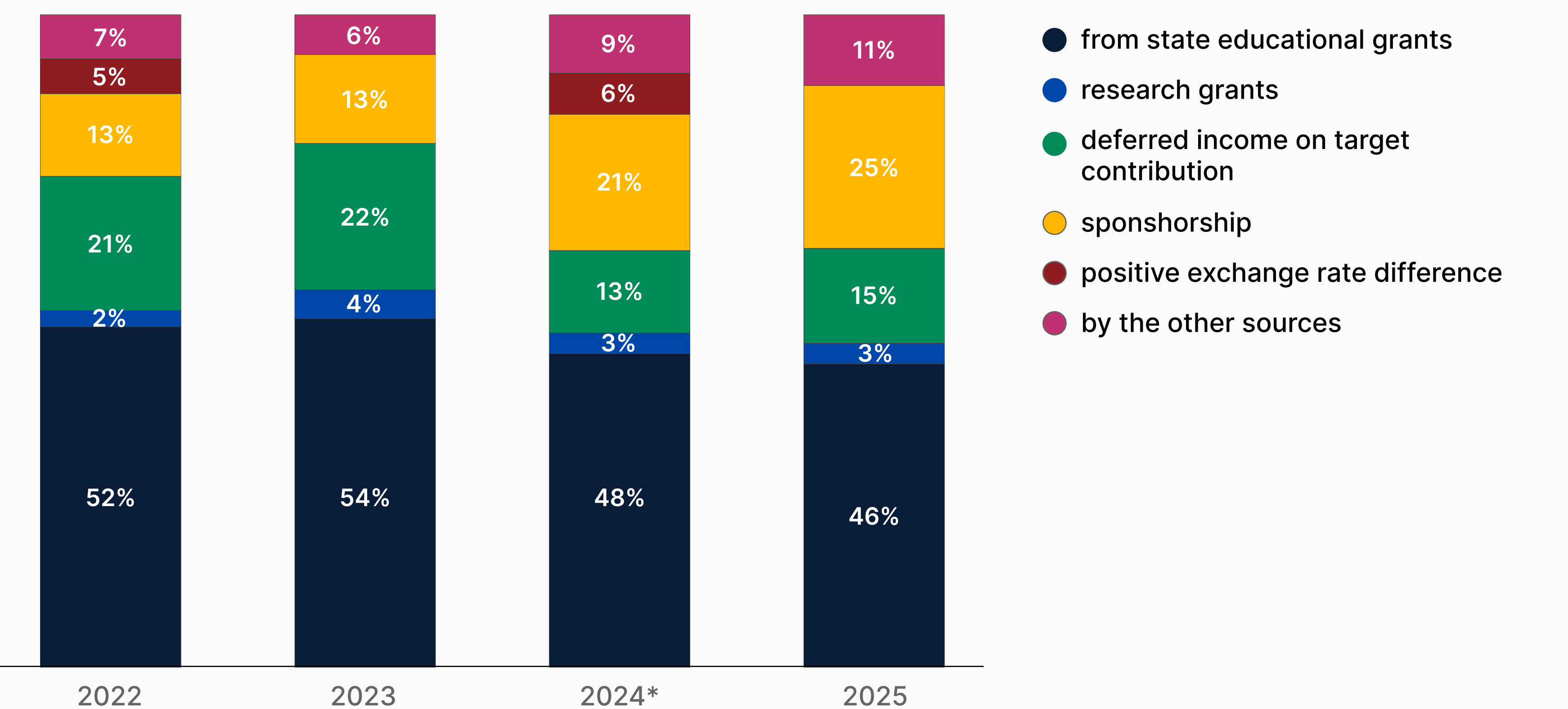
For information: Expenses for 2025 have also been kept in check, resulting in a positive financial outturn.

It is also worth noting that expenses in dollar terms decreased from \$203 mln in 2023 to \$170 mln in 2024.

Change of Funding Sources in 2022-2025

NU's funding sources have changed significantly in recent years. As Figure 13 illustrates, the amount of support the University receives in the form of state educational grants, relative to the University's overall budget, has declined. The University has increasingly relied on other sources of funding, such as sponsorships, tuition fees, and other fee-based income.

Figure 13. Income structure in 2022-2025



* - operational data for 2024

Key points of Figure 13:

State funding includes the following amounts:

- state educational grants (52% in 2022)
- amortization and recognition of previous capital investments (21% in 2022)
- research grants (2% in 2022).

In 2022, NU's income from the state educational grant accounted for 75% of total income. In 2024, this indicator stands at 64% (48% in the form of state educational grants – currently covering more than 80% of all students and equal to 5958 students in 2024, 13% from deferred income on target contribution and 3% from research grants).

The reduction in state support has been partially offset by an increase in sponsorship funds. In 2022, sponsorship funds accounted for approximately 13% of the budget, compared to 20% in 2024. Most of the sponsorship funds come from the Nazarbayev Fund PF. In 2024, the Nazarbayev Fund allocated \$30 million, which is \$15 million more than in 2022. It is planned to gradually increase the share of income from paid education.

For information:

Income from the state educational grants covers expenses of students' education.

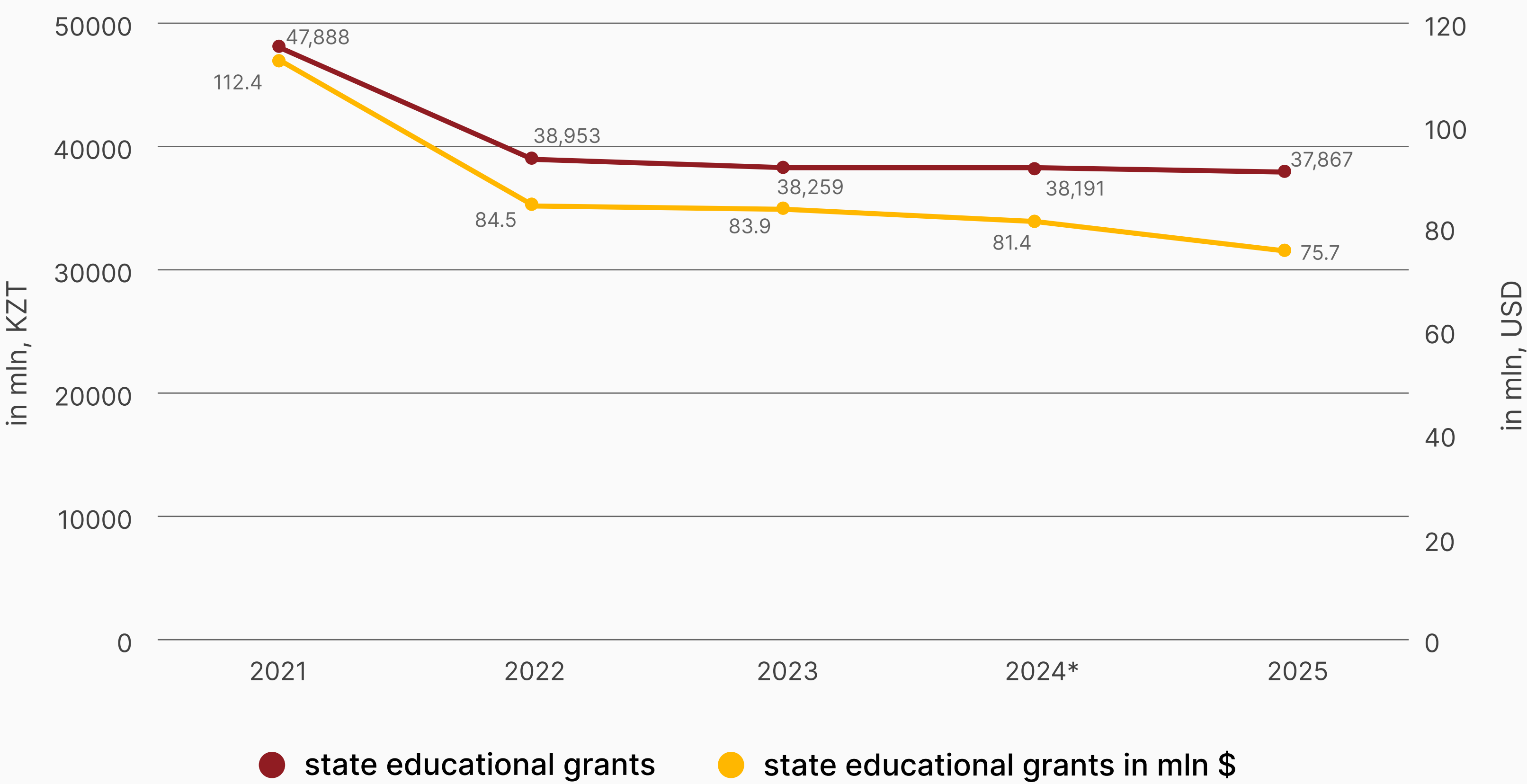
Deferred income on target contribution refers to the recognition of deferred income related to depreciation charges. As stated in International Accounting Standard (IAS) 20, “Government grants shall be recognised in profit or loss on a systematic basis over the periods in which the entity recognises as expenses the related costs for which the grants are intended to compensate.” In the University's case, target contribution funds allocated for the purchase of assets, construction, and reconstruction are recognized in profit or loss in line with the depreciation of the related assets.

Research state grants are funds from the state educational grants allocated within the framework of grants from the Committee of Science of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan or other state entities. In 2024, NU scientists have been implementing 152 such funded projects (in total, NU has had 322 active projects in 2024).

State Educational Grant Funding Trends 2021–2025

Figure 14 shows more details about NU funding from state grants.

Figure 14. Funding from state educational grants.



Key points of Figure 14:

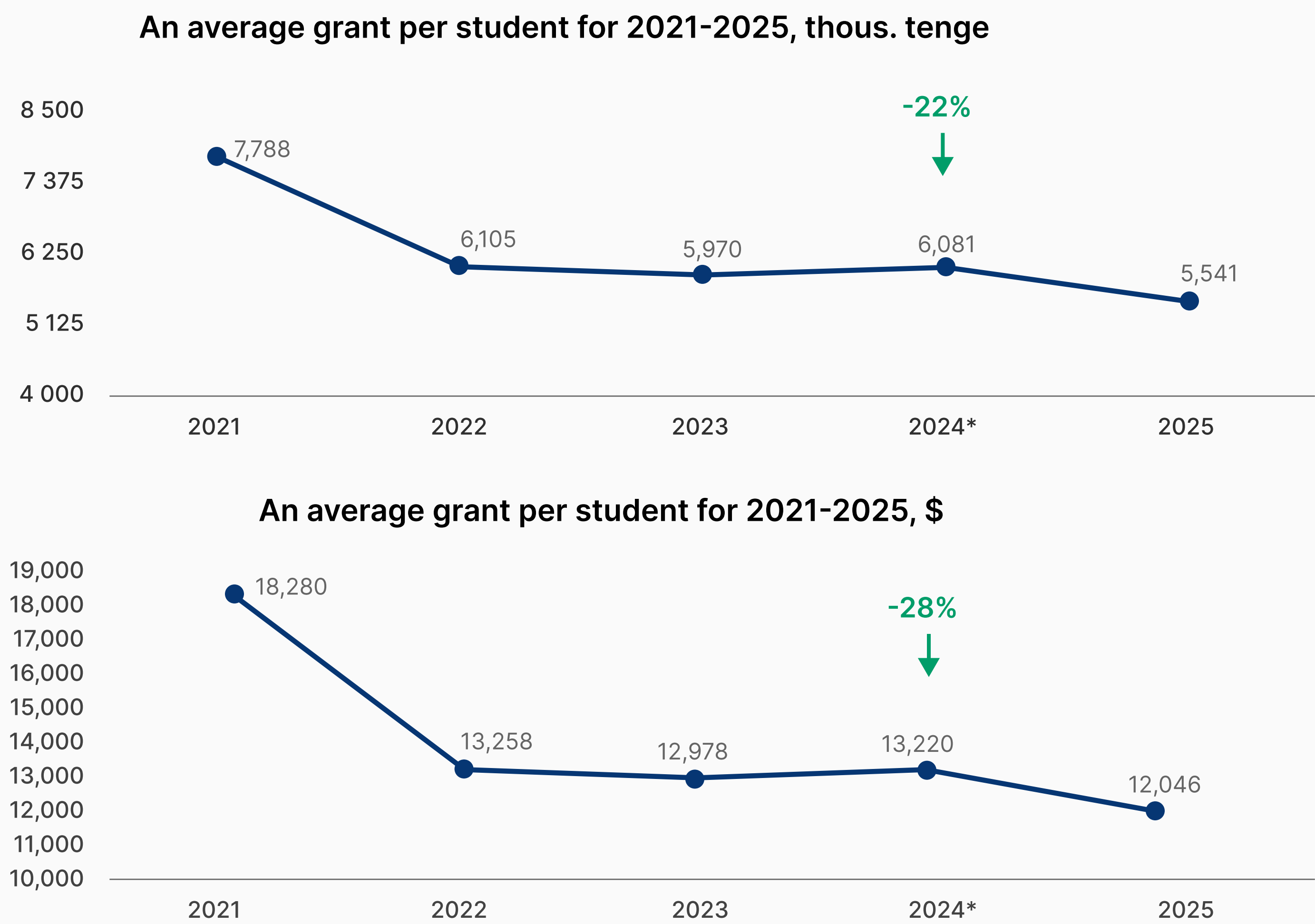
In 2021, the state educational grants amounted to 47.8 billion tenge. In 2022, this figure dropped sharply and has since remained at approximately 38 billion tenge, representing a 21% decrease.

For information: In 2021, the volume of the state educational grants in U.S. dollars was \$112.4 million. In 2024, it was \$82 million, a 27% decrease.

Reduction of the Amount of the Educational Grant for 2021-2025

The total allocation for the state educational grants has remained consistent since 2022 in national currency, but declined in USD. Nevertheless, recognizing the social importance of this issue, NU has maintained its student intake levels for "Nazarbayev University" educational grants (state-funded grants). Consequently, as illustrated in the Figure 15, the average size of the educational grant per student, provided by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, has been gradually decreasing each year.

Figure 15. An average grant per student for 2021-2025.



Key points of Figure 15:

The average size of the NU educational grant per student decreased from 7.8 million tenge in 2021 to 6 million tenge in 2024, a 22% decrease.

For information: the average size of the NU educational grant in U.S. dollar equivalents decreased even more significantly than in tenge. In 2021, this indicator was \$18,280, while in 2024 it was \$13,220, a 28% decrease.

The reduction in state support coincided with a significant increase in inflation and a decrease in the exchange rate of the national currency. For NU, which is positioned as an international-level academic entity with a predominantly internationally recruited faculty, these developments have imposed a considerable financial strain.

For information: in addition to state grants, NU annually accepts talented students for internal grants, such as “Alash”, “Ybyrai Altynsarin”, and “Abai” (more than 250 students), financed by the University’s own funds.

Income Structure in 2024 and 2025

Detailed information on income from state funding and other sources of funding for 2024, along with projections for 2025, can be found in Table 5 .

Table 5. NU income in 2024-2025.

Item	2024*	2025	Dev	2024*	2025	Dev
	in million tenge			in million \$		
Total income	83 008	82 741	-267	177	171	-6
State educational grants	36 373	36 064	-309	78	74	-3
Research grants	4 369	4 274	-95	9	9	-1
Target contribution	771	392	-379	2	1	-1
Recognition of deferred income on target contribution (depreciation)	11 261	12 445	1 185	24	26	2
Other sources of funding, incl.:	30 235	29 565	-670	64	61	-3
Sponsorship funds	17 066	20 926	3 860	36	43	7
Paid education, trainings and seminars	2 826	4 139	1 313	6	9	3
Income from asset management (accrued interest from deposits, currency exchange, investment income and other)	10 343	4 500	-5 843	22	9	-13

* - operational data for 2024

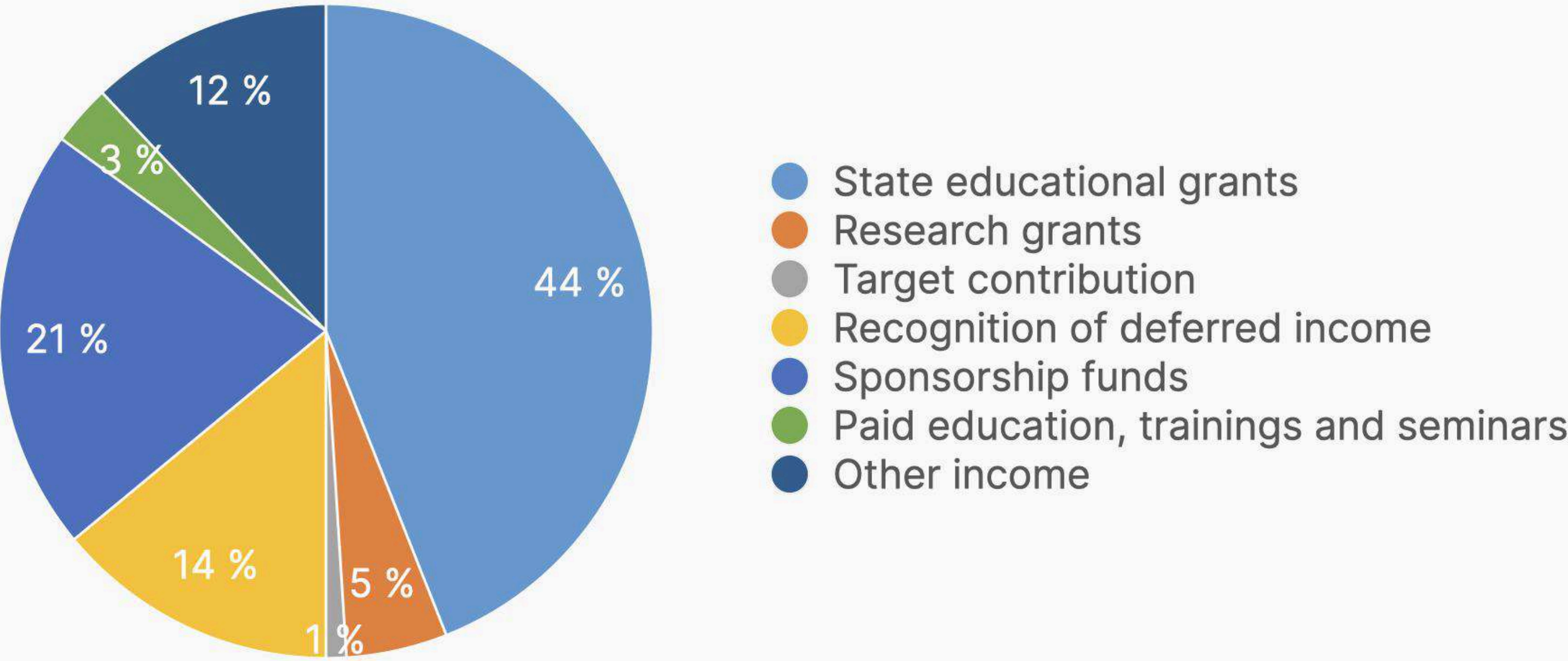
Key points of Table 5:

Income from state funding in 2024 was 52.7 billion tenge and included income from: 1. State educational grants – 36.4 billion tenge; 2. Research grants - 4.4 billion tenge; 3. Target contribution funds – 771 million tenge; 4. Recognition of deferred income on target contribution funds, depreciation charges, non-cash expenses - 11.2 billion tenge.
Income from other sources of funding in 2024 amounted to 30.2 billion tenge and included income from: 1. Sponsorship funds – 17 billion tenge; 2. Paid education, trainings and seminars- 2.9 billion tenge; 3. Income from asset management activities including accrued interest from deposited amounts, currency exchange, investment income and other – 10.3 billion tenge.

As shown in Table 5, the total income indicators for 2024 and 2025 show slight variations, with the projected total income for 2025 being 267 million tenge lower than in 2024. However, a closer look reveals an increase in income from sponsorship funds (by 3.9 billion tenge) and income from paid education, trainings, and seminars (by 1.3 billion tenge). These trends reflect NU's ongoing efforts to diversify its income sources by attracting new sponsors to support academic and research activities and by increasing the number of tuition-paying students.

The figures for 2024 include a net exchange rate difference of 5.4 billion tenge, categorized under other income. This non-cash accrual is the primary reason for the lower level of other income projected for 2025 compared to 2024.

Figure 16. Shares of NU income sources in 2024.



Structure of Expenses in 2024

Figure 17 below provides information on NU expenses' structure in 2024.

Figure 17. Structure of NU expenses in 2024.



Key points of Figure 17:

The majority of expenses, accounting for 67% of the total expense budget, were allocated to **academic activities**, primarily for organizing students' education.

NU fosters a globally diverse faculty by attracting experts from around the world. As a result, a substantial portion of academic activity expenses is dedicated to payroll and faculty-related costs, which are sensitive to exchange rate fluctuations.

In 2024, the largest share of academic activity expenses (53%) was allocated to faculty payroll, associated taxes, and related expenses.

Depreciation charges (non-cash accruals) constituted the second-largest share at 20%. Campus maintenance and infrastructure expenses accounted for 9%, while library and IT services represented 8%. Student-related costs, including internal grants' stipends, and travel, made up 3%. The remaining 7% was allocated to operational expenses such as consulting services from partner universities, consumables, laboratory materials, and other necessities.

NU is dedicated to achieving research excellence while ensuring that its research endeavors actively contribute to the socio-economic development of Kazakhstan and the broader region. As illustrated in Figure 17, 15% of NU's expenses in 2024 were allocated to **research**.

As a multicultural institution with students, faculty, and staff representing over 60 countries worldwide, NU's administrative expenses play a vital role in supporting its diverse and dynamic environment. These expenses encompass a broad range of activities essential for the university's operations, including the management of academic programs, student services, and campus facilities. In 2024, **administrative expenses** accounted for 11% of the total budget.

Note: Key components of administrative expenses include payroll and related expenses for administrative personnel (68% out of total administrative expenses), utilities and supplies (17%), and operational expenses to cover the organization of events, international collaboration efforts, and services aimed at enhancing the experience of students and staff (7%). The remaining portion of administrative expenses was allocated to depreciation charges.

In 2024, **expenses related to research, academic activity support, and other services** accounted for 7% of the total budget. These expenses included laboratory maintenance, engineering services, essential for sustaining research and academic activities, as well as expenses of NU organizations, such as National Laboratory Astana (NLA).

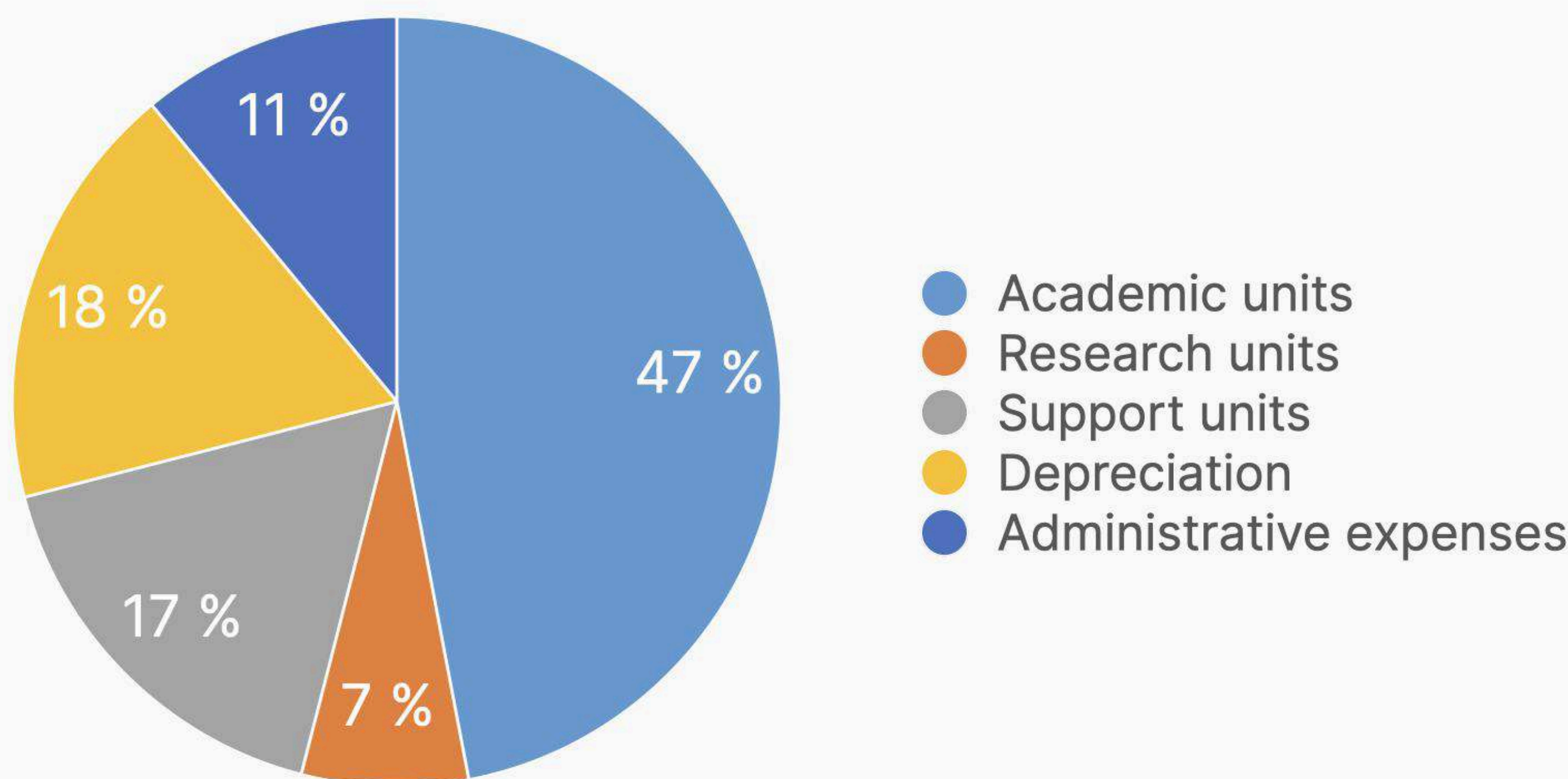
In 2024 Nazarbayev University (NU) managed the **largest research portfolio in its fourteen-year history**. A total of **322 projects were under implementation** during the calendar year: 128 were newly launched in 2024 (83 external-competitive awards and 45 internal faculty-grant projects), while 194 were multi-year grants that began in earlier cycles and continued through December 2024. Roughly **two-thirds of this active portfolio (217 projects)** was funded through competitive, peer-reviewed mechanisms; **about one-third (≈65 projects)** carried international sponsorship—from Horizon Europe, NIH sub-contracts, the Asian Development Bank, or corporate R&D contracts—underscoring NU’s growing global visibility.

Government sources inside Kazakhstan (chiefly the Science Committee and sectoral ministries) supported **152 projects**, or 47 percent of the overall research load. The consolidated multi-year budget attached to the 2024 project roster exceeded **KZT 18.9 billion** (≈ USD 40 million).

To deliver these projects NU operated a **network of 23 shared-use core laboratories** and specialist facilities that house **77 major research instruments**, including Kazakhstan’s first **ISO-6 clean-room Nanofabrication Facility**. Those labs processed almost **8 000 equipment-use requests** from 410 unique users in 2023–24, serving not only NU scholars but researchers from more than 40 other Kazakhstani universities.

Expenses by Units in 2024

Figure 18. Shares of expenses in a breakdown by NU units in 2024.



Key points of Figure 18:

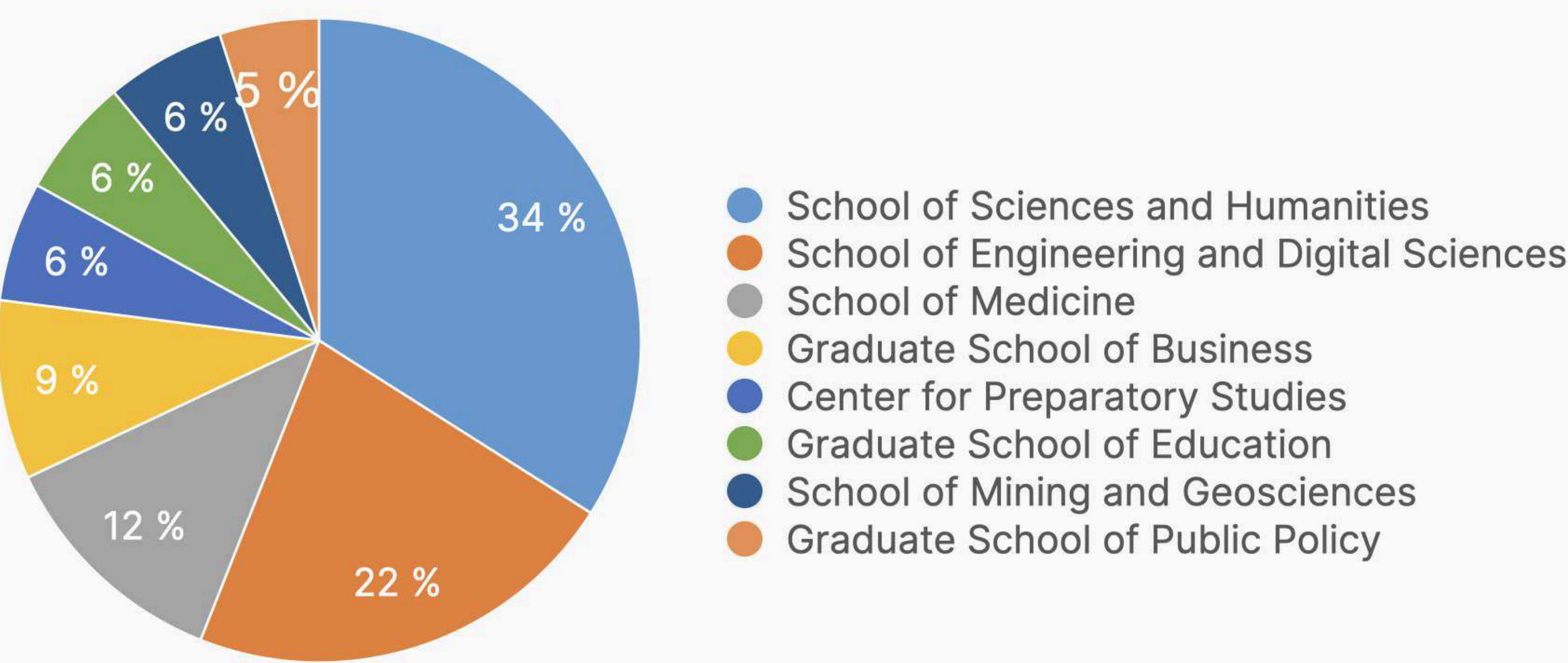
As Figure 18 indicates, 47% of NU total expenses in 2024 were on academic units. Academic units are 8 NU schools: School of Sciences and Humanities (SSH), School of Engineering and Digital Sciences (SEDS), School of Medicine (NUSOM), Graduate School of Business (GSB), Center for Preparatory Studies (CPS), Graduate School of Education (GSE), School of Mining and Geosciences (SMG) and Graduate School of Public Policy (GSPP). Each school provides distinct academic and research opportunities designed to meet the needs of specific disciplines. Figure 18 reflects a distribution of shares of expenses within Academic units.

In 2024 apart from NU schools, there were units that focus on research at the university, such as National Laboratory Astana and NURIS. NURIS also takes responsibility for collaborative research projects (CRP). CRP is designed to foster new interdisciplinary research partnerships among academic researchers from diverse fields and aims to strengthen collaborations between NU and other universities in Kazakhstan. Share of these units’ research expenditure was 7%.

Shares of **administrative expenses** (units) in 2024 were 11%, while support units share were 17%. Both of mentioned units support wide array of activities crucial to the university's operations, such as overseeing academic and research part, providing student services, and maintaining campus facilities.

The rest part is **depreciation** (non-cash) expenses of university, totaling 18% out of total expense budget.

Figure 19. Distribution of shares of expenses of NU Schools within academic units in 2024.



Key points of Figure 19:

As Figure 19 illustrates, NU’s largest schools — SSH (34%) and SEDS (22%) — accounted for the largest shares of academic unit expenses. The remaining schools collectively accounted for 44% of the total academic units’ budget.

Capital Expenditures in 2024-2025

The University annually allocates funds for the development, modernization and renewal of assets. The table below provides information on capital investments N U for 2024 and 2025 in million tenge and million \$.

Table 6. NU capital expenditures.

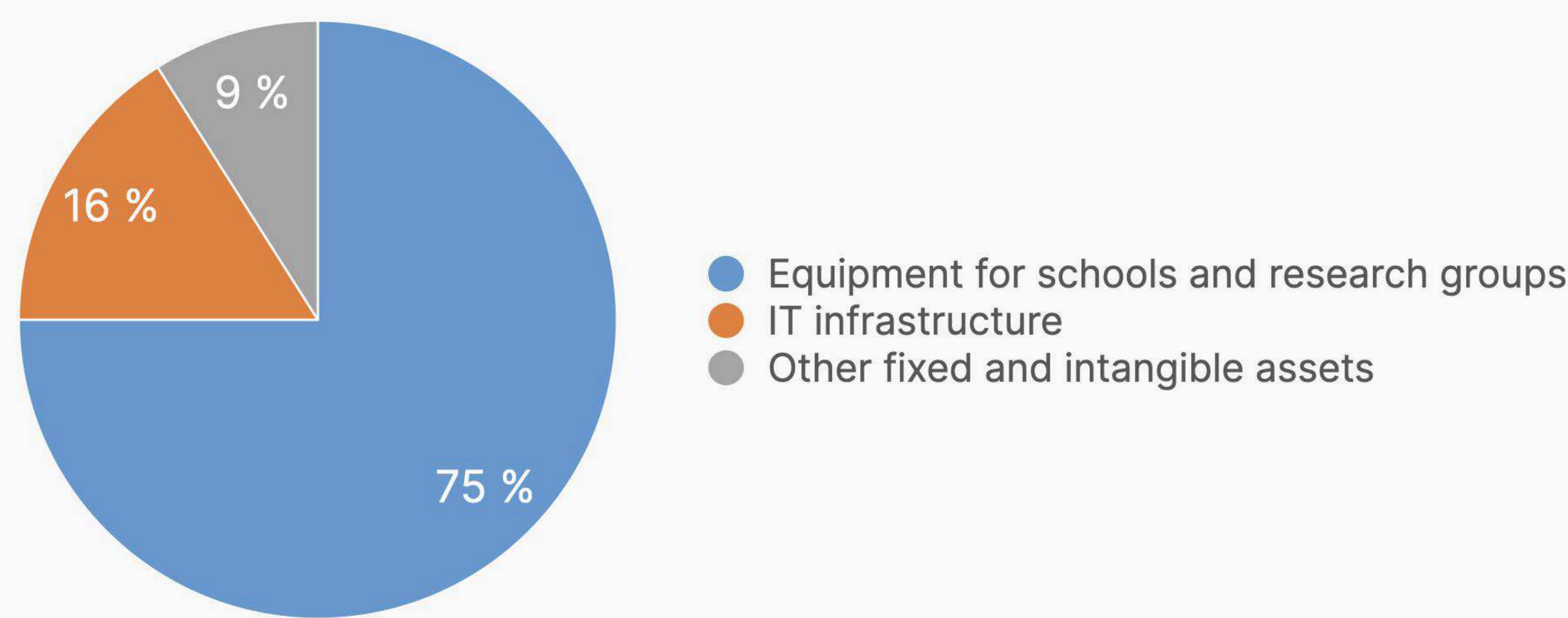
	2024	2025	2024	2025
	in million tenge		in million \$	
Total capital investment	9 920	6 662	21	14
Construction, reconstruction	5 418	2 193	12	5
Material and technical supply and informatization	4 530	4 469	9	9
IT infrastructure	723	1 050	1	1
Equipment for Schools and Scientific Groups	3 422	2 812	7	6
Other fixed assets and intangible assets	385	607	1	1

Following the results of 2024 the actual level of the capital expenditures amounted to 9.9 billion tenge, including 5.4 billion tenge for construction, reconstruction, with a primary focus on completing the construction of the Biomedical Center to be commissioned in 2025. The project is being implemented in accordance with international laboratory standarts.

Also, 4.5 billion tenge was directed towards the procurement of material and technical supply and informatization to ensure the effective operation of the educational process, research and administrative activities, including:

- equipment for classrooms - projectors and screens, computers and laptops for teachers and students, interactive whiteboards, furniture (tables, chairs, lecterns);
- research equipment - laboratory instruments, equipment for research in various fields, specialized tools and devices for conducting research experiments;
- software - licensed programs for educational and research purposes, operating systems and antivirus software to ensure data security;
- library resources - textbooks and research books, subscriptions to electronic resources, databases and journals;
- equipment for heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems;
- security and video surveillance - CCTV cameras, access control systems, monitoring and data protection equipment.

Figure 20. Major asset classes of the material and technical supply and informatization for 2024.



SOCIETAL IMPACT



◆ External Partnerships and Societal Contributions

International Collaboration

NU is dedicated to expanding its impact and reputation in Central Asia and globally. Since its founding, NU's strategic focus on partnerships with top-tier universities and research centers worldwide has enhanced its international visibility and reach. These collaborations, which span 22 countries, facilitate faculty, student, and staff exchanges and drive joint research initiatives, positioning NU as a key player in the global academic community.

NU has showcased its achievements through active participation in global academic networks, attracting talented students and researchers from diverse backgrounds. As a founding member of the Asian Universities Alliance (AUA), established in 2017, NU is committed to addressing regional and global challenges, particularly those related to higher education, economic development, and scientific advancement, by fostering collaboration among member institutions. Fifteen universities from 14 countries are members of the AUA:

- Tsinghua University (China);
- NU (Kazakhstan);
- Hong Kong University of Science and Technology;
- University of Tokyo (Japan);
- Seoul National University (South Korea);
- National University of Singapore (Singapore);
- Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (India);
- University of Indonesia (Indonesia);
- Chulalongkorn University (Thailand);
- University of Malaya (Malaysia);
- University of Colombo (Sri Lanka);
- University of Yangon (Myanmar);
- Peking University (China);
- United Arab Emirates University (United Arab Emirates);
- King Saud University (Saudi Arabia).

To further solidify its global presence, NU will focus on collaborative degree programs with international universities, enhancing its reputation in teaching and research. NU's outreach strategy will also prioritize hosting international conferences, workshops, and seminars, drawing global experts and scholars to engage with NU's academic community, and creating a vibrant forum for knowledge exchange.

Local Community and Social Responsibility

Nazarbayev University's forthcoming Community Engagement and Outreach Strategy aims to deepen collaboration with both local and international stakeholders, enhance the University's role in tackling regional and global challenges, and expand the impact of its outreach initiatives. As a leader in higher education, NU is committed to integrating education, research, and community involvement to create meaningful contributions across government, industry, healthcare, and public services. This strategic direction aligns closely with Kazakhstan's national priorities and supports lifelong learning, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

NU has already played a pivotal role in national capacity-building efforts, having trained over 500 top and mid-level managers from Kazakhstani higher education institutions and engaged more than 2,000 participants in the Academic Leadership Institute's professional development programs. The University also supports the broader research ecosystem by offering access to cutting-edge research equipment and shared facilities, benefiting over 40 universities across the country and contributing to more effective and high-quality research outputs. Our School of Medicine and the University Medical Centre are leading the way in training health care professions and developing models of integrated healthcare of international standard. At a broader level, our 9000 alumni are serving in all the major sectors of the economy with an increasing number entering leadership positions.

Looking ahead, NU plans to expand its impact through targeted training and development programs for higher education professionals, provide expert support for national advisory initiatives, and involve 800 participants in the University Bridge project. These efforts will help to strengthen academic and research cooperation nationwide and foster evidence-based policy-making through academic-government partnerships.

Education Quality and Stakeholder Satisfaction

Accreditation and Ranking

Times Higher Education World Rankings

As noted earlier, Nazarbayev University (NU) ranks within the 501–600 band in the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings 2025 (published in October 2024), placing it among the 24–29% bracket of global research universities. This distinguishes NU as the highest-ranked university in Central Asia, and one of its most prominent institutions. Other regional ranks include:

- Lomonosov Moscow State University (107);
- Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology (251-300);
- Bauman Moscow State Technical University (351-400);
- NU (501-600);
- Other major Kazakhstani institutions, such as Al-Farabi Kazakh National University and Gumilyov Eurasian National University, are placed lower (1201+ and 1501+ respectively).

Accreditation

NU strives to achieve internationally recognized academic excellence, and prioritize program accreditation through external bodies of the highest repute.

- The Graduate School of Public Policy's Master's programs in Public Administration and Public Policy were successfully accredited by the European Association for Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA) in 2019 and the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA) in 2023.
- The English for Academic Purposes program (Modules FEAP 010 and 020) of the Centre for Preparatory Studies was accredited by the British Association of Lecturers in English for Academic Purposes (BALEAP) in 2020 and reaccredited in 2024. NU is the first university in the CIS countries to gain BALEAP accreditation.
- The Graduate School of Business is in the process of pursuing the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditation. Its Full-Time and Executive MBA programs were accredited by the Association of MBAs (AMBA) and the Business Graduates Association (BGA) in 2023. AACSB and AMBA are two of the three main global accreditation bodies in business education. The School is now engaged in the annual review process for AACSB accreditation.
- In 2024, the School of Medicine received full international accreditation for its Doctor of Medicine (MD) program from the Eurasian Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Health Care (ECAQA), recognized by the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME). The School is currently pursuing the Agency for Public Health Education Accreditation (APHEA) accreditation for its Master of Public Health (MPH) program. The School has submitted its self-evaluation report to APHEA.
- The Graduate School of Education is progressing towards applying for the International Program Accreditation (IPA) by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA).
- 7 programs from 3 NU Schools - Schools of Engineering and Digital Sciences (SEDS), Mining and Geosciences (SMG), and Sciences and Humanities (SSH, STEM) are in preparation for the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) accreditation. ABET accreditation assures that a program has met standards essential to prepare graduates to enter critical STEM fields in the global workforce. The Schools have revised their programs to align them with ABET accreditation requirements and submitted their requests for readiness review. The list of programs is as follows:
 - BEng in Electrical & Computer Engineering; BSc in Computer Science (SEDS);
 - BSc in Petroleum Engineering (SMG);
 - BSc in: Physics; Chemistry; Mathematics; Biological Sciences (SSH).

NU is undergoing International Quality Review (IQR) by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA, UK), which leads to institutional accreditation for successful applicants.

QAA is a leading global agency in the quality assurance of higher education. The IQR is based on the compliance of institutions with the 10 Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). NU hosted a visit of the Review Team in September 2024 and is expecting a decision in early summer 2025.

Alumni

Nazarbayev University alumni consistently demonstrate high levels of satisfaction with their educational experience and maintain a strong sense of connection to the University. The majority of alumni – eight in ten – indicated they would choose NU again if given the chance, reflecting a deep appreciation for the institution's impact on their academic and professional lives. Interestingly, levels of satisfaction with NU tend to increase over time: 82% of undergraduate and 87% of graduate alumni expressed high satisfaction with their education three years after graduation, higher than the levels reported at the point of graduation. This retrospective endorsement highlights NU's enduring value in shaping successful careers and further education. Alumni also reported high levels of perceived preparation for both career and postgraduate study, with notable increases in positive perception compared to the time of graduation.

Beyond academic preparation, NU alumni are actively engaged in meaningful professional and societal roles. Many hold mid- to senior-level positions across a range of industries such as education, R&D, IT, and finance. Alumni frequently use NU-developed skills like analytical thinking, professionalism, and self-management in their careers, and over 70% are highly satisfied with key aspects of their jobs and lives. Nearly half of alumni have pursued further education, many are involved in innovation or entrepreneurship, and a majority express a desire to remain engaged with NU through mentoring, events, and institutional support. These findings reflect the University's success in cultivating not only academic excellence but also long-term professional and personal fulfillment.

Students

Students at Nazarbayev University report a highly positive academic experience, reflecting strong satisfaction with both the quality of instruction and campus facilities.

Based on the results of the 2024 First-Year Undergraduate Experience Survey, the majority of students at Nazarbayev University (NU) expressed a high level of satisfaction with their educational experience. A significant 82% reported being satisfied with the overall education they received, while 91% indicated a strong awareness of academic requirements. Students also highlighted a generally positive match between expectations and reality, with 64% stating that their experience either met or exceeded their expectations. Furthermore, students appreciated the quality of teaching (71% satisfaction) and reported particularly high satisfaction with university resources and services such as the library, laboratories, student services, and administrative support – each receiving satisfaction ratings of 96%.

Overall sentiment toward NU remained strong, with 87% of respondents stating they would recommend NU to others and 71% indicating they would choose NU again if given the choice. This reflects a generally positive student experience, underpinned by strong institutional support and student engagement. Overall, the survey results affirm that NU continues to deliver a holistic, high-quality educational experience that supports academic success, personal growth, and career readiness.





FUTURE PROSPECTS AND PLANS



Nazarbayev University's strategic vision for achieving academic and research excellence, with a core mission to contribute to Kazakhstan's economic and social advancement includes:

- Establishing itself as a leading research university, recognized for excellence both regionally and globally;
- Driving economic growth through technology transfer, innovation, and the promotion of startup ecosystems;
- Expanding access to higher education for vulnerable populations and international students;
- Raising national educational standards through strategic partnerships and knowledge exchange;
- Serving as a model of a world-class, regionally relevant institution known for outstanding teaching, a vibrant student experience, globally competitive research, and a deep commitment to Kazakhstan's development.

Nazarbayev University is dedicated to strengthening its academic and research capabilities while enhancing its international reputation. By 2027, NU aspires to be ranked among the top 500 universities worldwide and among the top 100 in the Times Higher Education Asia Rankings.

While the 2018-2030 Strategy originally set a target of reaching the top 200 globally by 2030, NU acknowledges that given current positioning in the 501-600 range and budget constraints, a more realistic goal is to achieve a top 300 global ranking by 2030.

To support this trajectory, NU is implementing a sustainable financial model centered on operational efficiency, diversification of revenue – including growth in non-degree programs and industry collaboration – and increased research funding. This approach will allow NU to invest strategically in faculty excellence, student success, and high-impact research, ensuring its continued rise as a world-class institution.



The 2023-2024 academic year was a landmark period for Nazarbayev University, marked by record achievements in academic growth, research excellence, and societal engagement. NU's total enrollment reached 7,089 students, supported by a diverse and international faculty, and bolstered by new records in graduate output and global recognition.

The University solidified its status among the top 24–29% of global research institutions, maintaining its 501-600 placement in the Times Higher Education World Rankings, and distinguishing itself as Central Asia's highest-ranked university. With a Field-Weighted Citation Impact of 1.93, a surge in Q1 publications, and increasing international collaborations, NU's performance reflects its strategic mission as a world-class research university.

NU's societal contributions extended beyond the campus, with every School making a contribution. Faculty composition remained robust and diverse, with more than 500 faculty representing over 30 nationalities, and a continued focus on international recruitment, research productivity, and academic leadership. A third of our faculty are now of Kazakh origin. Financially, NU returned to surplus after two years of deficits, demonstrating increased efficiency in expenditure and diversification of revenue streams. Significant investments in research infrastructure and capital development – including Kazakhstan's first ISO 6 Nanofabrication Facility – further reinforced NU's leadership in innovation and research.

As the University progresses toward its long-term goals outlined in the Strategy 2018-2030, this report underscores NU's steady advance in educational quality, research capability, and national impact. The foundation laid this year places NU in a strong position to achieve greater academic and societal influence both within Kazakhstan and internationally.