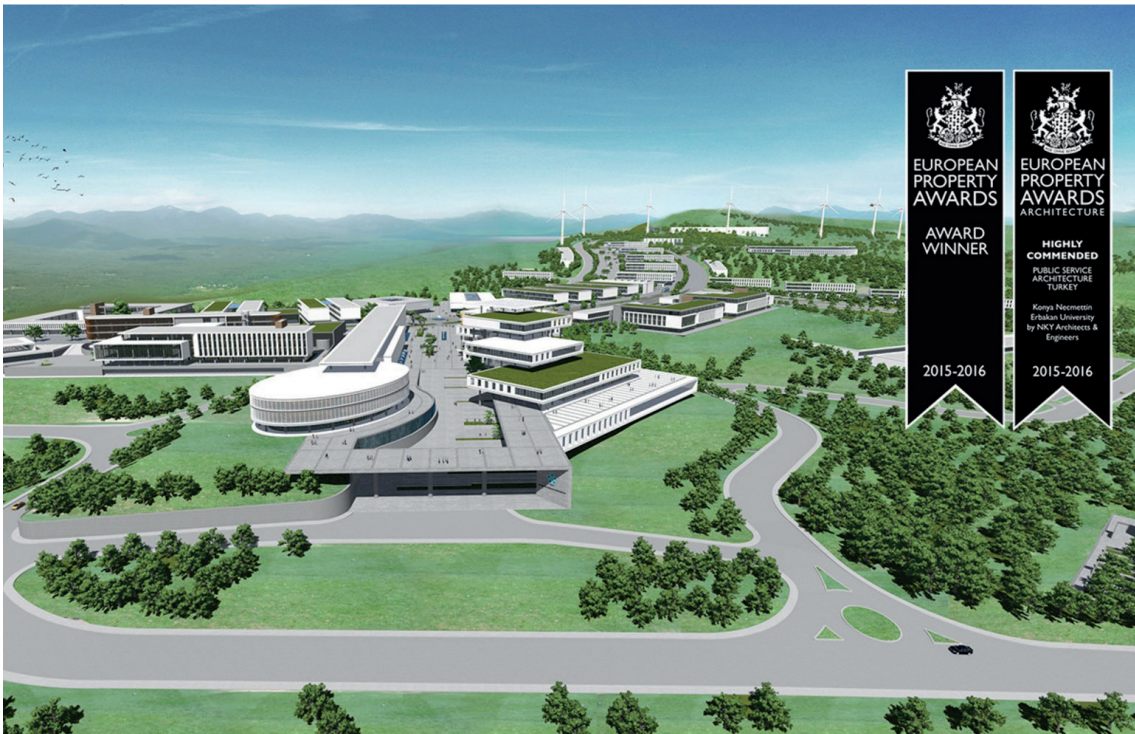




NECMETTİN
ERBAKAN
UNIVERSITY

INTERNATIONALIZATION STRATEGY 2021-2025





Welcome to Necmettin Erbakan University!

We are an innovative and dynamic state university in the beautiful city of Konya. We pride ourselves in our world-class research and novel approaches to learning and teaching, as well as our strong links with the industry and the public sector. Aware of the ever-increasing globalization of higher education, we continue to actively support our own students and academics to take part in initiatives worldwide, as well as to welcome international undergraduates and postgraduates, junior researchers, and established scholars. With this in mind, it is my pleasure to share with you our Internationalization Strategy. In addition to presenting a very small portion of our achievements, it is intended to shed light on our vision, partnerships, and global engagement.

The world is changing at an incredible pace. Let NEU be part of your experience and prepare you for the future!

Prof. Dr. Cem Zorlu, Rector



INTRODUCTION

Globalization of the higher education sector has come to represent a remarkable opportunity for greater interaction and collaboration between universities worldwide. Simultaneously, the increasingly competitive environment has imposed the need for a continuous improvement of competencies in order to successfully confront challenges and find durable solutions for the years and generations ahead. In this context, the mobility of students and academics, as well as their participation in joint projects and international partnerships, is recognized as core for the development of globally oriented individuals as contributors to the public good.

Cognizant of the circumstances, Necmettin Erbakan University (NEU) continues to invest efforts in becoming a key reference point in Turkey by embracing cutting-edge learning practices, and producing original

and highly impactful research. Our mission is complemented by the ambition to attract international talent, and encourage our own students and academics to engage with their peers abroad.

In order to consolidate our presence and accomplishments in terms of global engagement, we have developed an Internationalization Strategy. Building upon our current strengths, this document outlines our goals and supporting objectives in relation to infrastructure, the student body, and academic integrity.

Our Internationalization Strategy is a product of thorough consultation and consideration of multiple factors. Its implementation will be periodically audited to ensure accountability, and supplemented with further advice and guidance.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Necmettin Erbakan University was founded in 2010. As part of its inauguration, it incorporated some of the oldest higher education establishments in the city of Konya, including Ahmet Keleşoğlu Faculty of Education, the Faculty of Theology, and Meram Faculty of Medicine. Currently, NEU comprises twenty faculties, eight vocational schools, twenty-seven research centers, four institutes, one conservatory, and one college. The university hospital, with more than one thousand beds, treats more than one million patients and performs more than sixty thousand surgeries a year. In addition, we are very proud of our university press and library services whose resources, including access to more than thirty databases, have been recognized both nationally and internationally. Moreover, in order to ensure the highest standards of professional

conduct, NEU houses a range of monitoring and coordination offices.

The continuous growth of NEU has also been supported and facilitated by the city of Konya, a place where history and modern life interact with each other, creating a harmonious environment. Our own logo is designed with the idea to reflect interconnection and to promote universal values such as peace, social progress, and dignity and human equality. Moreover, our connection with the city, and the external world more broadly, has already paved the way to some real synergies between academia and industry. NEU's cooperation with the InnoPark Konya Technology Development Zone has provided us with an opportunity to propose and successfully implement numerous projects focusing on both services and manufacturing, with a particular emphasis on new designs





While being one of Turkey's fastest growing cities with regard to economy, urbanization, and transportation, Konya has also sought to preserve its long and rich civilizational heritage. Our five universities pride themselves in having the highest academic standards and infrastructure designed to inspire you and make you feel at home. We are here to prepare you for the future. Let Konya be your first choice!

Uğur İbrahim Altay, Mayor of Konya

At Necmettin Erbakan University, we recognize the undeniable influence of technology on knowledge accumulation and therefore seek to position ourselves as a leading Turkish university in terms of international partnerships. Our world-class campuses and research facilities make NEU an attractive place for foreign students and scholars, and a sound partner for international collaborative undertakings.

Mindful of the infrastructure required to pursue successful global engagement, NEU launched its Office of International Affairs in 2019. It was created to support and bring closer the previously established Erasmus+ unit, the Turkish government-funded Farabi and Mevlana units, as well as the International Students and Turkish Students Abroad units. Jointly, they contribute to the furthering of partnerships and collaborative arrangements.

More recently, and in order to accelerate its commitment to internationalization, NEU has opened a Center for Global and Area Studies. The center has already hosted numerous workshops and round-table discussions with renowned experts, together generating major interest among students, academics, and policymakers. In addition, the center has offered a number of fellowships,

traineeships, and other visiting opportunities to international students and academics.

We promote scientific activities covering issues of regional and global significance, by welcoming international academics and researchers with interests in economic and sociopolitical developments. Our interaction with scholars and audiences around the world has also enabled us to connect with new colleagues and broaden our network, thus creating a platform for new cooperation and joint initiatives.

Dr. Şeyma Akın, Center for Global and Area Studies

All of the above-listed achievements have contributed to our overall reputation, resulting in NEU being frequently ranked as a top post-2000 university. Going forward, we will continue to invest in facilities and excellence in research and education. We are determined to provide an inclusive and interactive working environment, in which creativity leads to innovation and an even greater collaboration with other universities, government, and the private sector.

Our master plan was based on being the recipient of the Best Campus Design and

Public Service Architecture Award during the 2015/16 International Property Awards Europe ceremony. For example, as part of its successful progression, the Faculty of Dentistry and its Dental Hospital have moved into a brand new building during the 2020 global pandemic. The construction, fully coordinated by the NEU Department of Construction and Technical Affairs, was completed in only 240 days, yet under some rather challenging circumstances. Since the new faculty building is designed to be operational even under pandemic conditions, it continued to provide health services at a time when those were generally interrupted. Similarly, our Faculty of Aviation and Space Sciences has used its new facilities to support additional student projects-one of them being an unmanned aerial vehicle, to be used across the premises. With the support of the faculty, NEU has won first and third places in the Vertical Unmanned Aerial Vehicle competition organized by the Middle East Technical University under the sponsorship of Boeing. In a different domain, the Faculty of Fine Arts' nine departments have also benefited from new spaces, including an exhibition venue.



As part of our continuous investment and in accordance with the Internationalization Strategy, we will also establish an International House, which will provide space for activities of a scholarly and non-scholarly nature, as well as additional accommodation for our foreign visitors.

In addition to our infrastructural plans, we will increase the number of our internationally accredited programs and representation in reputable membership organizations dealing with the international outreach of higher education institutions. Necmettin Erbakan University awards degrees in accordance with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System and Diploma Supplement labels, issued by the European Commission.

Furthermore, the NEU delegation visits to the existing and prospective partners as well as its presence at international fairs of higher education will serve to boost our university's external visibility and interaction with

stakeholders. This policy goes hand in hand with the Turkish Council of Higher Education's promotion of knowledge exchange between Turkish and international institutions, so that prospective students will be fully informed about the available study programs, international mobility opportunities, and job market and working environment.

In order to pursue the above objectives in the best possible manner, we advanced our governance structure and consolidated internal communication, especially between the rectorate and the faculties. We understand that successful delivery of projects and initiatives in the field of internationalization and global engagement of NEU as a whole is largely dependent on a shared vision of improving the experience of our students and academics.

Finally, as part of our tradition to recognize and celebrate hard work and contribution to knowledge-sharing, we will introduce annual internationalization awards.



OUR STUDENTS

Necmettin Erbakan University places students at the very core of its mission and corresponding activities. Aware of the challenges posed by globalization, we aim to produce graduates and junior researchers capable of playing key roles in the increasingly interdependent world. We pride ourselves in educating individuals who will use their knowledge, critical thinking, and innovative perspectives to engage with all strata of society either at national or international level. Our students are our ambassadors and we want their experience to make NEU the preferred institution of higher learning for future generations.

As part of our commitment to internationalization, many of our undergraduate and postgraduate students have participated in different mobility programs and by doing so, acquired competencies that are of great use for life and work in diverse contexts. More specifically, the Erasmus+ scheme provides an opportunity to experience higher education at various universities in the European Union. The Mevlana program is directed toward student and academic exchanges following bilateral agreements signed between Turkey and non-EU countries, and is approved by the Turkish Council of Higher Education. On the other hand, the Farabi program is designed to promote mobility among Turkish universities.





I will never forget my Erasmus+ experience in Latvia, which was absolutely incredible. During the six-month mobility placement, I gained a broader perspective of the outside world, allowing me to better plan my future career. In addition to helping with my personal growth, I think I also improved my employability prospects. Overall, I have become more confident and independent.

Kübra Şişman, Industrial Engineering

In addition to the well-established EU-funded and Turkish government schemes, NEU has signed more than fifty memoranda of understanding with universities and research centers worldwide. Altogether, they provide our students and academics with an opportunity to experience fresh academic environment and contribute to the global educational community.

NEU students can benefit from a range of preparatory sessions, including language preparation courses (English and German), so their mobility and international experience will be as rewarding as possible from the very beginning. Our goal is to increase the

proportion of Turkish students spending time abroad to 5%.

Since 2015, we have witnessed a steady increase of international students wishing to come to Konya and selecting Necmettin Erbakan University as their first choice for either undergraduate or postgraduate study. In order to accommodate as many international students as possible, we have gradually increased the number of available places and also significantly reduced tuition fees. So far, we have welcomed students from 92 countries and our international students represent approximately 5% of the overall student body.

In addition to admiring Turkish hospitality and the country's unique role as a bridge between East and West, international students have shown a lot of appreciation for NEU disciplines and degree programs. Going forward, as a part of our mission to make studying at NEU even more accessible, we will seek to establish two new scholarship schemes: the NEU Global Scholarship and the NEU Konya Scholarship.

Overall, my experience at the Meram Faculty of Medicine has been wonderful. The school has provided me with the strongest possible foundation for my future career of a physician, as well as a researcher and team leader. Academics have been supportive throughout, either within the lab and clinic, or in the lecture theater and seminar rooms. Indeed, all my friends and I have found the school's vibrant atmosphere quite stimulating. In the end, we have embraced a common purpose—to advance our knowledge of medical sciences in order to help others.

Khairbinat Umerova, Ukraine

I was very excited to come to NEU and pursue a degree in economics. Just the fact of studying in a different environment from your own is a fabulous experience. The intensive study and interaction with academics and practitioners, all together at the forefront of current research, makes the program truly unique. While benefiting from the robust curriculum combining theory and practice, I have also managed to develop a range of other skills and took part in numerous workshops and training sessions.

Mu Yu Wang, China



Our faculty members are renowned experts in the field of politics, economics, and public administration. In order to address the pressing challenges of our time from a variety of perspectives, our approach to research and teaching is rather interdisciplinary. In addition to providing students with academic knowledge well rooted in the social sciences, we also contribute to their formation through a variety of programs altogether aimed at personal and professional development. When possible, we also include our students in research schemes and international projects. At the same time, and in line with NEU's commitment to internationalization, we have developed initiatives to attract foreign students and scholars alike, welcoming them to experience our community of intellectuals.

Prof. Dr. Birol Mercan, Dean of the Faculty of Political Science





In the years to come, individual faculties will be expected to develop sound policies targeting recruitment of international students, both undergraduate and postgraduate. This will gradually feed into the NEU's target of reaching 10% international students by 2025. Moreover, faculties will continue to work closely with the Office of International Affairs in order to identify and promote new scholarship schemes, as well as to explore new partnership opportunities for student mobility and curriculum enhancement. Consequently, a regular monitoring of

activities and exchange of good practice will provide cross-faculty collaboration and further consolidation of the NEU Internationalization Strategy.

Many of our faculties already offer courses and degree programs in English. In addition to diversifying cohorts at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, our goal is to also offer a number of professional development certificates. These will target the needs of the future job market, including training in cyber security, risk management, robotics engineering, digital marketing strategy, artificial intelligence, and machine learning.

Completing an all-English master's degree in South Asian Studies has given me an insight in the economic systems, the politics and the culture in the region and that is very valuable if you want to work in Asia. It allowed me to specialize in a region in Asia but still keep a very broad scope. Everyone in the program is very diverse because we all have different backgrounds. Academics guide you through and ensure that you get the best out of the program. I'm now back home and have started working, and I proudly say I graduated from the International Relations Department of NEU.

Gesta Fauzia Nurbiansyan, Philippines

Our close links with the industry and the city of Konya provide us with a major opportunity to assist our students to have direct access to a variety of internships. We understand the importance of work experience for all our students' personal and professional development, and therefore we seek to provide them with additional, extra-curricular engagement while studying with us. A wide range of sectors and organizations have

welcomed our students so far, all expressing appreciation for their commitment to professionalism. As the result of these links and training placements, a good number of our former students have become entrepreneurs themselves.

There are more than one hundred active student groups and communities at Necmettin Erbakan University. Alongside this success, we are also determined to keep closer contact with our former students, and this is why we plan to establish an alumni association as a part of the Internationalization Strategy. Such an initiative will be complemented by annual gatherings which will represent a forum for interaction and networking. Subsequently, we will invite our alumni to share their own experiences about career and professional development with our current students. Following a consultation with our alumni, we also hope to establish an Alumni Fellowship Program, as a platform allowing our former students and researchers to come back and spend extended periods at NEU.



ACADEMIC INTEGRITY



Necmettin Erbakan University prides itself on academic excellence. Since the inauguration, we have attracted scholars with international training and whose impactful research has been recognized both nationally and internationally. Their findings continue to inform policy and contribute to the national economy as well as to Turkey's competitive position in the global context.

In terms of research excellence, the Turkish Academic Network and Information Center has acknowledged the volume and quality of both projects and publications produced by our academic community, by placing NEU in the top 25% of more than two hundred universities surveyed. Our determination to become a leading research university is also reflected in the fact that we host 14 scientific journals and NEU Press has strategic partnerships signed with some of the most prestigious publishing houses, including Wiley and Springer. In accordance with the Internationalization Strategy, we will continue to improve our track record of

publications, as well as our visibility in the international arena by taking part in research databases.

The ground-breaking research originating at NEU has provided us with participation in numerous external projects. For example, our colleagues specializing in urban planning and tourism management have taken part in consortia focusing on sustainability and accessibility, by developing approaches to support stakeholders and thus enhance tourism industry in an ever-changing and competitive environment. Moreover, NEU has provided scientific and consultancy services for the Seljuk Autism Education Foundation, which was soon afterwards recognized as an exemplary model of cooperation between academia and civil society. With regard to our relationship with industry, during his visit to the Konya Science Center, Nobel Prize Winner in Chemistry Professor Aziz Sancar openly acknowledged NEU's investments and wholehearted support in the field of science and technological development.



In addition to our engagement with the outside world, the work of our researchers has regularly appeared and won awards in national and international competitions. For example, Professor Pembe Oltulu of the Faculty of Medicine was the only Turkish scientist featured in the 2018 Pathologist's Top 100 Power List, published by The Pathologist magazine. In a completely different area, Professor Ahmet Çaycı, Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts, and his research team have been widely recognized for their archeological excavations around Konya's Gevale Castle, a place of a key strategic position during the Roman, Byzantine, and Seljuk periods. While offering new insights about the glorious past of the region, this project, which has been carried out in

collaboration with the Selçuklu Municipality and Konya Museum Directorate since 2012, represents a major contribution to the breadth of national and world heritage.

International scholars, either as temporary or permanent members of staff, are key to the overall experience of our students. So far, NEU has participated in different consortia promoting mobility and training, and has continued to welcome international visitors through bilateral agreements signed with its European and non-European partners. Their invaluable contribution to education in a foreign language and cultural diversity of our university have gradually transformed our campuses to become even more welcoming and cosmopolitan.

In yet another distinctive way, we are extremely proud of our Conservatory, whose academics and performance committee continue to train future generations of educators and stage artists in the field of music. Its Department of Instrument

Education has been recognized among researchers as a key point of reference for anyone interested in Turkish cultural and artistic expressions, and acquisition of expertise in order to evaluate psychological and sociological dimensions of art.



I joined the Department of Computer Engineering in 2015. Broadly, the Faculty of Engineering offers excellent research-led training in the field of information technologies. It covers cybersecurity, data sciences, artificial intelligence, computer engineering, information systems, etc. While acknowledging the relevance of computing for the digital economy and today's knowledge society, the faculty is strategically oriented toward creating a quality environment and preparing students for the job market. Our students consistently demonstrate high levels of academic performance, as well as interest in innovation and leadership by participating in national and international competitions, and also registering their inventions.

Dr. Mohammed Hussein Ibrahim, Iraq

With the above in mind, individual faculties will be expected to work closely with the rectorate in order to identify priority areas and develop hiring plans targeting academics at all levels, from post-doctoral researchers to senior professors. Apart from being crucial for the formation of our students, the presence of scholars with a foreign background is likely to boost our international contacts and lead to further international collaboration.

In order to further facilitate interaction between NEU and international academics, we plan to implement a robust agenda focusing on new funding opportunities, selection of consortia participants, and the grant-writing process.

In addition to the support targeting external income generation and large-scale projects, NEU will continue to support individual faculties and research centers to host workshops, summer schools, joint doctoral training, as well as programs of a dual degree nature. Altogether, these are viewed as key for both knowledge-sharing and future collaboration.

Thus, with everything we have achieved so far and with our vision as to where we see ourselves going forward, we recognize international interactions as an absolute prerequisite. We believe that our Internationalization Strategy, as a result of joint in-house and external efforts, will help us realize our ideas.





Sille, Konya

your future...

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