

International Student Policy of Nakhchivan State University: Opportunities and Development Directions

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Açar sözlər: *beynəlxalq münasibətlər, ali təhsil müəssisələri, beynəlmilləlləşmə prosesi, global trendlər, müasir çağırışlar, beynəlxalq tələbələr*

The conceptual foundations of the integration of independent Azerbaijan into the international community were formulated by the national leader Heydar Aliyev, and this process is currently being systematically continued, covering all spheres of social life. The domestic and foreign policy course implemented by President İlham Aliyev, referring to national interests and challenges existing at the global level, is aimed at increasing the level of participation of Azerbaijan in the system of international relations and more effectively using the opportunities provided by that system.

There is an appropriate regulatory and legal framework and sufficient state support for the wider involvement of higher education institutions in the internationalization process and their transformation into an integral part of the global higher education system. The purposeful and effective use of this potential necessitates the preparation and consistent implementation of internationalization strategies in accordance with the development priorities of higher education institutions.

The internationalization strategy at Nakhchivan State University is aimed at increasing the university's international competitiveness and deepening its integration into the global higher education space in accordance with the development trends of higher education in the context of globalization. The aforementioned strategy aims to expand international cooperation, promote academic mobility, and align the quality of education with international standards based on the university's institutional development priorities.

In this context, the establishment of partnerships with foreign higher education institutions, increasing participation in international projects and programs, as well as attracting foreign students and teachers to the university are considered as the main strategic directions.

As a result of the tolerant environment formed in the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic and the attention paid to foreign citizens, the number of foreign students studying at Nakhchivan State University is increasing every year. The conditions created for foreign students at NSU are at a high level, and the quality of education they receive is constantly in the spotlight, just like local students. Foreign students actively participate in the university's social and cultural activities, they are actively involved in the preparation of various events,

concert programs and in the social life of the university. It should be noted that currently 1712 students from 19 countries (Turkey, Iran, India, Yemen, Cambodia, Tanzania, Germany, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Georgia, Uzbekistan, Morocco, Bangladesh, Palestine, Rwanda, Somalia, Nigeria, Russia, Korea) are studying at the university at the bachelor's and master's levels.

Applications from foreign citizens to study at various levels of higher education at Nakhchivan State University are increasing. There are several main and interrelated reasons for the increase in interest in studying here. Let us briefly present them:

1. The recognition of the Republic of Azerbaijan as a tolerant and safe country in the international community creates great interest among foreign students in terms of living comfortably in our country, receiving quality education and getting to know different cultures closely. Azerbaijan, including the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, is a region with a stable, safe and multicultural environment. This fact is a basic condition for foreign students in terms of living comfortably and safely during their studies.
2. The educational policy of the Republic of Azerbaijan and state support create great interest among foreign students in terms of receiving high-level technological opportunities, obtaining a diploma in accordance with international standards and studying in a favorable environment. The state's strategies aimed at attracting foreign students, reforms in the field of education and international propaganda increase interest in NSU.
3. The quality of education and strong human resources potential at NSU attract foreign citizens to study here in terms of acquiring modern knowledge, benefiting from professional teaching staff and expanding future career opportunities. Modern educational

programs, qualified professors and teaching staff and scientific potential at NSU are attractive to foreign students. The organization of education in accordance with international standards further increases interest in the university.

4. The availability of affordable education and living expenses is also among the factors that cause foreign citizens to continue their education here. Compared to many countries, tuition fees at NSU are more affordable. Living and daily expenses in Nakhchivan city are affordable. This also creates a great advantage for foreign students.

5. International cooperation and agreements not only increase the prestige of NSU, but also strengthen the interest of foreign citizens to study at this higher education institution, as they create exchange programs, joint projects and double diploma opportunities. The memorandums of cooperation signed by the university with higher education institutions of various countries, exchange programs and double diploma opportunities strengthen its international recognition.

6. Appropriate educational opportunities for foreign students - preparatory courses, education opportunities in various languages, adaptation and support mechanisms facilitate the integration of foreign students into the university.

7. The multicultural and inclusive university environment at NSU creates conditions for students from different nationalities and cultures to feel comfortable and safe, which has a positive impact on the selection and admission of foreign students to this university. The joint education of citizens of different countries leads to the formation of a rich multicultural environment at NSU. This plays a positive reference role for new students.

8. The international promotion of the university increases the reputation of NSU, ensures that information about educational opportunities reaches a wider audience, and as a result, has a positive impact on foreign students choosing this higher education institution.

The relations established through education and culture indicate the increased development of peace and cultural cooperation in the region. This strengthens trust between countries and turns the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic into a place of cooperation. Growing international relations give impetus to the development of education, housing and social infrastructure. They accelerate the formation of services in accordance with international standards, and this process leads to an increase in the quality of infrastructure and services (Zaporozhchenko, Turchyn, Marchuk, Boichuk, Shakotko, & Barulina, 2022).

Foreign students studying at Nakhchivan State University directly and indirectly affect the development of the Azerbaijani language and culture. As foreign students use the Azerbaijani language in daily communication, in the academic environment, and at official and informal events, the language begins to move away from being a means of local communication and is perceived as a language of international communication. In particular, the teaching of the subjects “Azerbaijani language” and “Speech development” in the preparatory stage organized for foreign students, and “Business and academic communication in Azerbaijani language” in the chosen specialty group, leads to the systematic dissemination of the language. Thus, the process of internationalization of the Azerbaijani language is created through foreign students.

The expansion of international cooperation relations of NSU and the strengthening of cultural exchange provide the Nakhchivan

Autonomous Republic with sustainable development in scientific, cultural, social, and economic terms, as well as international integration and a positive image.

Currently, the education of citizens of 19 different countries at Nakhchivan State University makes a multifaceted and significant contribution to the formation and strengthening of tolerance. The joint education of foreign students representing different nationalities, religions, languages, and cultures increases mutual respect and understanding among students. This environment helps to eliminate stereotypes and forms a multicultural environment (Zahir, 2025).

Different cultural values, customs, traditions, and worldviews are shared through foreign students. This also creates conditions for the development of a culture of dialogue and the strengthening of intercultural dialogue. Local students, by communicating with young people from different countries, gain a global perspective, form a more open and tolerant approach to the world, which leads to the growth of globally minded young people.

A joint educational environment strengthens the ideas of peace, cooperation, and mutual trust between peoples, and practically demonstrates a model of a tolerant society. This, in turn, leads to the promotion of the values of peace and coexistence and the strengthening of these values among people (Allahverdiyeva, 2025).

By accepting this diversity, Nakhchivan State University contributes to the real manifestation of Azerbaijan's multiculturalism and tolerance policy, to increasing the country's international reputation, and to strengthening the image of tolerance of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The integration of

foreign students into society also leads to the creation of an inclusive social environment and the natural and valuable acceptance of differences. The fact that citizens of numerous countries study at Nakhchivan State University creates a model where tolerance is experienced not only theoretically, but also practically (Allahverdiyeva, 2025).

The increase in the number of foreign students at Nakhchivan State University and the education of students from different countries have a strong impact on the promotion of multicultural values, both from a practical and ideological perspective. The joint education of students from different countries, nations, religions, and cultures in the same academic environment turns multiculturalism from a theoretical concept into everyday life experience. Constant communication with representatives of different cultures ensures the acceptance of differences, the formation of mutual respect, and the development of tolerant behavior models. The activation of intercultural dialogue is expanding further. Through foreign students, different traditions, holidays, and national values are introduced, cultural events, presentations, and discussions are held, and the culture of dialogue is strengthened (Lala, 2025).

The correct educational policy and international educational environment created for foreign students studying at NSU make a real contribution to the international recognition of the Azerbaijani language, the global circulation of national culture, and the strengthening of NSU's position as a cultural center.

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