

APPROVED

**By the decision of the Board of
Directors of NJSC “Aktobe regional
university named after K. Zhubanov”
(Protocol No.7 dated November 8, 2025)**

**NJSC “AKTOBE REGIONAL UNIVERSITY NAMED AFTER K. ZHUBANOV”
ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2024**

Aktobe, 2025

During the reporting period, the NJSC “Aktobe regional university named after K. Zhubanov” (hereinafter – the University) achieved significant progress in academic, scientific, and international activities, as well as in educational work and infrastructure development.

The University became one of six winners of the program-targeted funding grants provided by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (hereinafter – the MSHE RK). Within the framework of this program, the University established the Center for Academic and Research Excellence (hereinafter –CARE), which includes three modern laboratories in metallurgy, materials science, and chemistry, offering research services to enterprises in the mining and metallurgical industry. The program will enable substantial modernization of the University’s scientific and laboratory facilities, the formation of a strong team of researchers, and the achievement of applied results with practical implementation in the real sector and production facilities of Aktobe.

The Heriot-Watt International Partner Campus at the University continued its active development: for the first time, students were given the opportunity to study under the Go Global program at the campuses in the United Kingdom and Malaysia. This program represents a unified global approach to learning, quality assurance, and academic standards. University staff completed internships under the “Bolashak – 500 Scientists” program at Heriot-Watt University’s main campus in Edinburgh. This year, the campus welcomed students from 11 regions of Kazakhstan, as well as international students from Russia and Uzbekistan.

An important sign of trust from the academic community was the University’s election as the Chair of the League of Academic Integrity. The University strengthened its position as one of the leaders of higher education in Kazakhstan, reaffirming its commitment to high academic standards and its significant role in training qualified professionals for the western region and the country as a whole.

RESULTS OF ACTIVITIES UNDER THE STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY

Priority direction 1. Ensuring high-quality training of competitive personnel

Educational activities at the University are carried out in 25 fields and 8 areas of higher education. A total of 122 educational programs are implemented, of which 92% are accredited by the National Accreditation Agencies (NAAR – 50 programs, KazSee – 26 programs, IQAA – 5 programs, and ARQA – 31 programs).

To enhance academic quality, Academic Committees and Quality Assurance Commissions operate within the University, bringing together faculty members, students, and employers. In 2024, the University reaffirmed its compliance with the standards of the League of Academic Integrity and was elected as its Chair.

The student population during the reporting period amounted to 13,756, with 43% studying under government grants. Instruction is conducted primarily in the state language. In 2024, 3,691 applicants were admitted, including 137 holders of the “Altyn Belgi” distinction, and the average Unified National Test (UNT) score was 78.1. The graduate employment rate reached 74%. According to the ranking of the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs “Atameken”, 23 educational programs ranked in the Top 10, and 3 programs ranked in the Top 5.

During the reporting period, the University was included among the Top 30 universities in Central Asia according to QS, and for the first time entered the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings (in the 1501+ category), demonstrating its contribution to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Professional development of staff remains a key priority: in 2024, 63% of faculty members completed training, including international internships. Training courses were conducted on pedagogical leadership, inclusive education, artificial intelligence, and CLIL methodology, in partnership with Häme University of Applied Sciences (Finland) and through the Coursera platform. Twenty-one staff members became fellows of the international “Bolashak – 500 Scientists” program.

In parallel, the University continues to modernize its infrastructure. Renovations were carried out in libraries, academic buildings, and dormitories; RFID systems and a mobile library card application were implemented; and modern open-space learning zones were created. In dormitories and the “Zhastar Üyi” residential complex, living spaces and equipment were upgraded. These measures aim to create a comfortable, technologically advanced, and modern educational environment.

The University also actively develops marketing and digital communication. In 2024, the official website was redesigned, and the University’s social media audience more than doubled compared to the previous year: Instagram reach totaled 5.24 million views, and TikTok – 885 thousand. The University was featured in 169 publications in regional media and 45 national-level materials.

Priority direction 2. Development and improvement of the efficiency of scientific research and innovative developments

In 2024, the University’s faculty members implemented 30 research projects totaling 1.68 billion KZT, including 14 projects under grant funding, 11 under the “Zhas Galym” (Young Scientist) program, 3 projects by early-career researchers, 2 under program-targeted funding, and 5 contractual research projects commissioned by local executive bodies and enterprises. A total of 57 new grant applications were submitted to

the Science Committee of the MSHE RK, 7 of which were approved for funding.

The University also secured a 3 billion KZT grant for the establishment of the CARE, which began operations in 2024. The Center includes three modern laboratories in metallurgy, materials science, and chemistry, providing research services to enterprises in the regional mining and metallurgical industries.

During the reporting year, 149 articles were published in the Scopus database and 74 in Web of Science. The University's H-index reached 14, with a total of 494 citations. In December, a scientific and technological session was held with the participation of the MSHE RK, the Science Fund, and the "Samgau" Center, where discussions focused on the region's environmental challenges, including groundwater pollution at the Kokzhide field.

In 2024, the University obtained three patents, including for a static mass analyzer, a luminescence technology, and a mobile yurt-shaped cabinet. Applied research is actively expanding: in collaboration with Carboflow LLP, work is being carried out on wastewater purification; with Iron Bars LLP – on the creation of a "smart horizontal bar" for people with disabilities; and with NS Service Group LLP – on the development of fire extinguisher powder.

As part of the "Mamandygym – Bolashagym" ("My Profession – My Future") project, foresight sessions were held for key regional industries – oil and gas, metallurgy, transport, renewable energy, and water management – involving over 60 experts and 30 organizations.

The University operated four dissertation councils, and 11 dissertations were successfully defended in mathematics, physics, and philology, with all doctoral candidates earning the PhD degree.

In 2024, 11 faculty members and researchers of the University became winners of national grants and awards: five in the category "Best University Faculty Member", two as "Best Researcher", three as recipients of scientific fellowships, and one as the winner of the M. Auezov Prize for Young Scientists.

Priority direction 3. Internationalization and International Cooperation

In 2024, the University signed 15 cooperation agreements with universities in Türkiye, Poland, Georgia, Malaysia, the United States, and Azerbaijan. Under academic mobility programs, 76 students studied abroad, while an additional 40 students undertook studies under memoranda of understanding with foreign partner institutions, including Ege University, University of Malaga, AGH University of Science and Technology in Krakow, INTI International University, and Marshall University. For the first time, 16 students from the Heriot-Watt International Partner Campus studied in the United Kingdom and Malaysia under the Go Global program. The University also welcomed 46 international students from Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, China, and Russia.

The geography of international students expanded to 14 countries, including Uzbekistan, Russia, China, Germany, Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Ghana, and Kenya, among others.

In 2024, the University participated in several international projects, including joint initiatives with Purdue University (USA) and the Satbayev University under the "Leading Academic Transformation" program, as well as the U.S. Department of State project "Scaffolding PUDP to English Language" supported by the ARELTA Association. Together with Astana IT University and the University of Cincinnati

(USA), the University became a grant recipient of the American Councils for International Education program, aimed at developing an entrepreneurial ecosystem and implementing smart city technologies in Kazakhstan.

The University also participated in UN Women and Athena Educational Solutions projects dedicated to advancing early education and reading instruction methodologies across Europe and Central Asia.

International academic engagement was further strengthened through the involvement of 68 visiting scholars from leading global universities, including the University of Reading (UK), the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, and the National Taiwan University, who delivered lectures, workshops, and seminars.

In 2024, 21 University faculty members were awarded grants under the international “Bolashak – 500 Scientists” program, selecting specialization areas such as engineering, management, and IT at Heriot-Watt University, the University of Michigan, the University of Minnesota, and the University of Leeds.

The University also hosts four language centers – the Confucius Institute, the Korean Language Center, the Turkic Languages Laboratory, and the Polish Culture Center. In 2024, a total of 1,336 students received training at these centers, contributing to improved foreign language proficiency and greater involvement in international programs.

Priority direction 4. Fostering a harmoniously developed personality based on human values

The Student Parliament of the University, which includes 10 senators, 30 chairpersons of the Majilis, and 5 ministers, serves as the key institution of student self-governance. In 2024, approximately 350 events were held across five main areas of educational and developmental work.

Civic Engagement and Spiritual-Moral Education. A total of 84 events and 699 mentoring hours were conducted, including the Adal Urpaq Youth Forum, the OpenSoz Lectorium project in cooperation with UN Women, and a series of anniversary events dedicated to the 125th anniversary of K. Zhubanov, such as a debate tournament, poetry contest, and the Studlife initiative. More than 500 students participated in volunteer relief efforts for flood victims, providing humanitarian and psychological support.

Social Education. A total of 50 events and 587 mentoring hours were organized, including concerts at nursing homes and orphanages, creative workshops, Nauryz celebrations, and meetings with distinguished guests.

Legal Education. A total of 125 events and 2,776 mentoring hours were conducted, focusing on the prevention of offenses and gambling addiction. Key activities included meetings with representatives of the Prosecutor’s Office, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and human rights organizations, as well as the national debate tournament “Disease of Society: Gambling and Financial Pyramids.”

Physical Education and Healthy Lifestyle. A total of 53 sports events (amounting to 647 hours) were held, including the launch of university sports leagues, the Zhubanov Run mass marathon, and the development of student sports clubs.

Environmental and Labor Education. A total of 45 activities and 931 mentoring hours were conducted as part of the Taza Kazakhstan (Clean Kazakhstan) campaign and the EcoQuest–2024 environmental challenge.

In 2024, 947 students received social support, including grants from the Kazakhstan Khalkyna Foundation, presidential and corporate scholarships, as well as

benefits for volunteers and student activists.

The Health and Well-being Center provided psychological support to students and staff, delivering 2,296 counseling hours, including 53 emergency sessions. Over 3,300 students received individual or group assistance. The Center also organized the international forum “Healthy Generation – Nation’s Wealth” and a roundtable dedicated to World Mental Health Day.

As part of professional development initiatives, 270 faculty members completed training sessions on stress resilience, environmental management, and burnout prevention. The work of the Center is aimed at fostering a healthy, safe, and inclusive university environment.

Priority direction 5. Ensuring sustainable financial and economic development of the university

The amount of financial resources spent on updating educational and scientific equipment over the 12 months of 2024 totaled 1,083,818 thousand KZT.

The share of income from research activities for the 12 months of 2024 amounted to 1,678,455 thousand KZT, including scientific grants from the MSHE RK totaling 1,633,195 thousand KZT, as well as funding from JSC “NCP Orleu,” co-financing of research projects, and income from contractual research works amounting to a total of 45,260 thousand KZT.

The volume of income from research activities under state scientific grants as part of the university’s total income for the 12 months of 2024 amounted to 1,678,455 thousand KZT, compared to the planned 668,530 thousand KZT.