



SAR ANNEX - 9

**Sample report for 2020 Follow-up
Program**

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INSTITUTIONAL FOLLOW-UP REPORT

SABANCI UNIVERSITY

Follow-Up team

PROF. DR. NEDİME LERZAN ÖZKALE (TEAM LEADER)

PROF. DR. SÜHEYDA ATALAY (ACADEMIC EVALUATOR)

PROF. DR. İLYAS GÖKHAN (ACADEMIC EVALUATOR)

HATİCE KÜBRA ÇIKRIKÇIOĞLU (STUDENT EVALUATOR)

SUMMARY

The Sabancı University “Institutional Follow-Up Program” started on June 7, 2021 and was completed on July 8, 2021 following the remote follow-up visit held after two meetings between the team members and the uploading of the follow-up report to the THEQC official webpage.

In the meetings held within the team, the contents of the Institutional Feedback Report (IFR) 2018, the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) 2019 and the ISER 2020 and performance indicators were reviewed and discussed, and the data on the university website were evaluated. In the first session of the meeting, rector Prof. Dr. Yusuf Leblebici Dr. provided information about the university and its potential.

Afterwards, a meeting was held with the members of the Quality Commission and Sabancı University on the ISER and IFR and improvement works and the internal quality assurance system was discussed via presentations along with the questions and opinions of the follow-up team. At the meeting, Vice Rectors and the Secretary General presented information based on sub-criteria on the improvement works resulting from the 2018 IFR, and the plans and steps of the future quality assurance works. The Follow-up team summarized their findings, and views were exchanged on the establishment of the internal quality assurance system and the institutional accreditation process.

Afterwards, an interactive meeting was held with Chairperson of the Sabancı University Board of Trustees, Ms. Güler Sabancı, on issues such as the university's efforts to transition and continue online education, its investments, the importance it attaches to interdisciplinary studies, more effective research, and relations between centers and faculties. The visit ended at 14.00 following the exit meeting with the Rector.

At the end of the "Institutional Follow-up Program" it was concluded that Sabancı University further developed and made sustainable its strengths that were identified by the feedback report issued by the evaluation team after the Institutional External Evaluation Visit in 2018 in the fields of Quality Assurance System, Learning and Teaching, Research and Development, Service to Society, and Governance System; and also meticulously realized improvement works regarding their areas for improvements with the university administration and the board of trustees. It was also concluded that improvement works for disseminating a few points of improvement to the entire institution is going on.

INFORMATION ON THE INSTITUTION

Established with the philosophy of "creating and developing together", Sabancı University started offering its programmes in the 1999-2000 academic year. The academic units of the university are clearly parallel in undergraduate and graduate studies and provide ease of examination and follow-up. Accordingly, in addition to three faculties that provide undergraduate education (Faculty of Engineering and Natural Sciences, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Faculty of Management), there are three graduate schools that provide research-based postgraduate education (Graduate School of Science, Graduate School of Social Sciences, Graduate School of Management) In addition, many research and service to society centers already stand out as units with high national and international recognition, with their high research and project implementation capacities and productivity.

Sabancı University has the mission of “developing internationally competent and confident individuals advancing and fostering knowledge in natural sciences and engineering along with

humanities, social and management sciences through innovative trans-disciplinary research” and the vision of “transformative impact on science and society” and adopts academic principles of Academic Honesty, Academic Freedom, Non-Discrimination and Honesty in Scientific Research.

The principal strategy of Sabancı University is “to solve selected global and regional problems and to train people to solve them” for the period 2018-2023 and it sets out the following strategic goals for the current period,

1. Maintaining its leading role in education
2. Increasing our quality research volume
3. Attracting and retaining highly qualified human resources
4. Ensuring the financial continuity of the university
5. Maintaining our leadership in innovation and entrepreneurship
6. Improving our level of internationalization

Having been governed by an acting rector, after the new rector took office in 2020, the University started the work of "A New Strategic Plan in the New Period (2020-2025 SP)" by making fundamental amendments to the 5-year Strategic Plan covering the years 2018-2023.

The institution's continuous quality improvement approach has been fully established and internalized by all stakeholders, as was noticed during the External Evaluation visit in 2018 and stated in the IFR. The shortest way to explain how this approach, which can be periodic in some institutions and can regress with changing administrations, has taken such a deep root in Sabancı University is to refer to a quote during the meeting from Ms. Güler Sabancı, Chairperson of the Board of Trustees: "We cannot improve the work that cannot be measured".

Another area that needs to be emphasized and the institution is attuned is its awareness about the Sustainable Development Goals determined by the United Nations, of whose vitality we realize day after day. It has been noted that these objectives, which have started to be included among the competencies or program learning outcomes of higher education quality agencies all over the world, have been taken into account by Sabancı University in the new Strategic Plan works, and care has been taken to ensure the alignment of the renewed Strategic Goals with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and Distance Education.

THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

The most solid indicator that Sabancı University pursues successful policies in line with its goal of becoming a university that can compete at the global level is its upward graph in national and international rankings. This result has been achieved by the internalization of the participatory and inclusive strategic planning approach by all stakeholders and its adoption by the University since its establishment. The University has made the preparation and updating of the Strategic Planning Directive and the Strategic Plan cyclical. In this regard, regular cyclical works such as Search Conferences are reported and necessary improvements are made. With the change of Rector at the University, revisions were made in the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan and the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan was prepared. There are many examples of good practice in which a quality system that provides quality assurance with a planned development and management approach has been established and internalized.

The goals, objectives, sub-objectives, and Strategic Performance indicators tied to them as well as their numerical objectives are determined in the Strategic Plan, and it is stated that the necessary financial resources are provided in order to reach the objectives, and that the Board

of Trustees, all units and the Quality Commission systematically follow up whether the annual achievement of objectives are ensured.

The institution repealed the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan and replaced it with the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan. In the Institutional Follow-up meeting, the Rector and the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees explained the reason for this modification as being the change of senior management that prepared the 2018-2023 Strategic plan before it could be implemented and observation of significant transformations in subjects such as digitalization.

The institution showed the importance it attaches to the Quality Assurance System by being the first university in Türkiye to become a member of EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) in 1998. In the process, the institution got the following certifications from various organizations [ISO 9001: 2015 Quality Management System Certificate \(Turkish Accreditation Agency\) 2012-2015-2018-2021](#), [ISO 14001: 2015 Environmental Management System Certificate \(Turkish Accreditation Agency\), 2018 - 2021](#) and [ISO 45001: 2018 Occupational Health Insurance Certificate](#).

[Sağlığı Güvenliği Belgesi](#) Computer Engineering and Science, Electronics Engineering, Industrial Engineering and Mechatronics Engineering programs run by the institution are accredited by the Association for Evaluation and Accreditation of Engineering Programs (MÜDEK). In 2020, the School of Foreign Languages received the EAQUALS Accreditation Certificate accreditation. The Integrated Manufacturing Technologies Research and Application Center (TÜMER KTMM) received the Accreditation Certificate for the Competence of TS EN ISO/IEC 17025 Experiment and Calibration Laboratories on February 27, 2019. This certificate has been revised and made valid until February 26, 2023. The AS9100 RevD certificate, which the institution received on 9 March 2020 in line with the AS9100 Aerospace and Defense Industry Quality Management Standard RevD, is valid until 8 March 2023. These policies followed by the institution regarding Quality Certificates, and Accreditation processes are exemplary.

The institution is reminded below of the strengths and areas for improvement stated in the report following the Institutional External Evaluation visit in 2018 regarding the Quality Assurance System, and whether the sustainability of the strengths could be achieved and the developments in the areas for improvement are discussed.

Strengths in the 2018 IFR:

- It is seen that the Quality Process has started to be implemented since the establishment of the University. The Institution committed to the **Quality Policy** with the participation of all stakeholders in 2012. It received Quality Policy and Quality Certificates consisting of Quality Assurance and Environment and Occupational Health and Safety Policies. It is observed that the commitment of all stakeholders, including managers of the institution, academic and administrative staff to maintaining quality assurance policies **remains as a strength and this makes it sustainable**.
- The Institution systematically organizes Search Conferences every 10 years with the participation of researchers, students, business people and University employees, who are invited from inside and outside. Similarly, **the updating of the Strategic Plan**, and the continuous review of the quality policy with a performance monitoring structure, **made the strengths sustainable**.
- It is seen that the institution **internalized the Quality Assurance System by all its components, and its follow-up, review, internal and external audit records, directives, meeting minutes, quality documents, various accreditations reveal that the institution's Quality Assurance System is strong and sustainable**.

2018 Areas for Improvement as Stated in the IFR

- ***Although the integration of the Strategic Plan and the budget was achieved to a large extent, full integration could not be achieved because the action plans for the current year could not be foreseen (2018):*** From the beginning of 2020, a strategy review work was carried out with the involvement of internal and external stakeholders, and strategic goals and main parameters were determined. The budget work of the institution is carried out according to the Budget Preparation and Implementation Directive, and **since the budget is determined according to performances and projects it is a strength and no longer an area for improvement.**
- ***Fundraising requirement (2018):*** The main resources of the institution are the donations of Sabancı Foundation and Sabancı companies. In addition, fellow institutions, alumni, employees of the University and opportunities provided by individuals also constitute the resources. The institution aims to meet certain development needs and scholarship funds in order to contribute to the education of successful students with financial problems, so that the vision, mission and goals of the institution, that aim at continuous resource development, are embraced and supported by large masses. As the institution could provide clear and traceable evidence throughout the ISER that the institution is able to increase its resources with continuous aids, donations and funds due to being a strong foundation university, continuous fundraising **is a strength and no longer an area for improvement.**
- ***Lack of evidence that the balance between the units is ensured in the strategic plan-budget relationship (2018):*** It was stated that in the budget works of the institution, separate meetings were held with all units, the needs were listened, the needs analyzes were taken into account in order to reach the strategic goals, the budgets of the units were decided to the extent permitted by that year's financing plan and then put into effect after the approval of the Board of Trustees by the senior management. The institution states that it primarily lists academic needs related to teaching staff, student numbers, fees, scholarships, course and research expenses. Besides, as basic administrative needs (expenses related to eating/drinking/transportation for all employees etc.) vb. are centrally planned and managed in a way that ensures equality and balance for all units, **it is a strength and no longer an area for improvement.**
- ***Lack of performance indicators for the goal of transforming society (2018):*** Although the goals and performance indicators determined in this area are included in the revised 2021-2025 Strategic Plan, since there is no evidence of monitoring yet, this issue should be stated as **the only area for improvement** however, it should be added that it is expected to be worked out by the end of this year.

LEARNING AND TEACHING

Sabancı University exhibits a contemporary educational approach that is valid in the 21st century by not forcing students' program preferences in the first year, and by designing it as a year that students can shape to a large extent with their own preferences, due to a multi-faceted, diversified and flexible educational approach. However, the domain that still remains as an area for improvement in terms of employment of quality processes that are widespread and internalized by all-stakeholders is the learning and teaching domain. PDCA cycles related to the program outcomes targeted in learning and teaching cannot be followed at least from the student system web pages. Although the accreditation of the programs in the field of engineering proves that this goal is achieved, whether the program outcomes provide National Higher Education qualifications and field-specific qualifications, and which course learning outcomes contribute to the acquisition of the learning outcomes of the relevant programs is still an area open for improvement. Especially in a university where flexible learning methods

which are emphasized above are practiced, and as per the rector's statement about the possibility of transcripts of two students who graduated from the same program showing significant differences, this topic gains even more importance.

DISTANCE LEARNING

Sabancı University was able to offer all its courses online within a week, through the investment made in digital education, amounting to 11 million TL. In the meetings held with the University governors and the Senate during the visit, after the finding that university education cannot be separated from the campus, it was stated that the digital environment increased the time students spend with faculty members and the overall duration of utilization of learning environments also increased. When face-to-face training begins in the future, it was predicted that this experience gained during the pandemic could be transformed to the benefit of users.

In the 2021-22 Fall semester, with the technical equipment of all classes made ready for distance education, it was decided to give all courses in a hybrid manner. For example, in the event of a large number of students from Pakistan and Iran not being able to travel, or students not being able to travel out of the city or due to health reasons, or students who are on campus but want to watch the course again, the recordings proved to be an important resource.

Although online activities continue intensely and they are seen as a disadvantage, stakeholders who could not attend the events, especially those who do not live in Istanbul were reached through webinars, academic seminars and programs which are held almost every week on topics such as climate change, urbanization, gender equality, education reform, conflict resolution, European Union relations, renewable energy, accessing clean energy and water. Examples of these events can be listed as Climate Café, Nature and Climate, Istanbul Perspectives, Epidemic and Society, What kind of a World What kind of a Turkey, Purple Certificate Program, 16th Energy and Climate Research, Best Practices in Education Conference, Hatay and Denizli Local Workshops and Competition Forum Webinar Series. In addition, webinars open to public were held at certain times, and works that contributed to the development journey of employees from the business world under the umbrella of Sabancı University EDU: Examples in 2020 were 'Mood Up Webinars' and 'EDU Dialogues Series'.

The Altunizade Digital Campus, opened in 2020, is a strong indicator of the priority given by SU to digital education. The disadvantage of the campus being far from the city was thus overcome, and a central unit was created that could be used for face-to-face education, for postgraduate education in particular when necessary, the unit comprises 11 classrooms, 3 meeting rooms, 2 studios, a seminar hall and common areas, all equipped with digital technology as a requirement of the 21st century.

The center focuses on next-generation technologies such as big data, advanced data analytics, cybersecurity, industrial internet of things, robotic workforce, artificial intelligence and blockchain. In addition, the Sabancı University Küçükköy Creative Technologies Workshop, which was established in 2019 in cooperation of Ayvalık District Governorship, Ayvalık Municipality and Ayvalık District Directorate of National Education with the aim of serving the society, continued in 2020 considering the education and equality rights of children, with science and technology-based online trainings provided by Sabancı University Faculty members and students.

STRENGTHS

Distance Education which was explained above can be added to the existence and sustainability of the **Fundamental Development Program**

that was previously identified as a strength in the relevant heading of the IFR in 2018. . Outstanding investment in **Distance Education** and its sustainability as **hybrid education models after the pandemic** are two important, **strong and good practice examples**.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The developments regarding the Areas for Improvement pointed out in 2018 are given below:

- **The lack of reference to NQF-HETR** in the explanations about the program design processes.
 - The NQF-HETR is included in the Information Package Database related to the programs. This topic is **no longer an area for improvement**.
- **Sharing improvement of non-accredited programs with internal and external stakeholders** was improved, and it is **no longer an area for improvement**.
- Expansion of the **accreditation works that have started in some programs to the entirety of all programs**,
 - has been provided and **it is no longer an area for improvement**.
- **Improvement in information on programmes in internal web**, has
 - been provided and **it is no longer an area for improvement**.
- **Removal of difficulties** of accessing programs, courses and related information
 - packages on the **external web** has been provided and **it is no longer an area for improvement**. However, there are problems that persist in the information package such as the lack of explanation of L1, L2 abbreviations in the Program outcomes and Competencies matrix, or in the courses and program outcomes matrix. It should be possible to read which output or which competence it is when hovering over it. The same is valid for the national qualifications provision matrix delivered with a pdf document. In addition, since it is not possible for all courses (e.g. econ 202) to provide all qualifications, such errors should be corrected and the system should operate accurately. It is especially important that the relevant departments understand how comprehensive and detailed measurement and evaluation will be required in order to prove such a course with all learning outcomes and to make corrections.
- **Although the learning outcomes of some programs are expressed as** related field qualifications, some of them are associated with the **NQF-HETR** the institution should ensure a uniformity throughout the Institution by eliminating these differences.
 - As these insufficiencies in this topic continue in some programs, this subject continues

to be **an area for improvement**. Strengths of SU

on education and training:

- Existence and sustainability of the Direction Foundation Development Program
- A hybrid education model made sustainable with Distance Education infrastructure and Digital Campus.

Areas for Improvement are:

- The relationship from course learning outcomes to program outcomes, from program outcomes to National Area and National Qualifications has not been established or made
- visible.

The learning outcomes of the courses are not in line with the Bloom's taxonomy logic and there are either too many or none.

- It is not identified which learning outcomes of the courses in the Foundation Improvement Program contribute to which learning outcomes of each program or they have not been made visible.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

In order to carry out research and development activities at Sabancı University an ecosystem has been established supported by policy documents, directives and boards/committees established for this purpose.

The prominent strengths of Sabancı University in Research and Development identified in the 2018 IFR are as follows:

Criteria for measuring research performance in the Strategic Plan,

- Strong organizational structure supported by the implementation-monitoring-evaluation cycle based on planning and policy development,
 - Human resources comprising competent
 - researcher/faculty members, effectiveness of the
 - institution's research support,
- an effective University-Industry cooperation in research.

According to the evaluation made in terms of the sustainability of the strengths:

Within the scope of the University's new strategic plan works for 2020, Sabancı University's Research Policies were handled holistically by the Board of Trustees Research Committee to form the basis of the process of determining research strategies. It has been prepared as the Sabancı University Research Policy Approach, including research principles and future approaches.

At Sabancı University, research activities are carried out in the fields of science, technology and art with an interdisciplinary approach in Faculties, Centers and Forums. The management of research-related activity processes are run by the Research and Graduate Study Policies Directorate (ALP) and the Research Planning and Policy Development Office (APG) that work under the Vice Rector that is responsible for Research and Development, within the framework of planning and policy development, implementation and monitoring-evaluation cycle. The APG and ALP implement all their functions in coordination with the various boards and committees of the University, and aim at ensuring the sustainability of the research cycle. The fact that the processes were reviewed by the ALP and the need for updating the guidelines in 2020 was an important step in terms of the sustainability of research management.

The “Technology Fields Mapping Study” was carried out by the Research Process Planning and Policy Development Office (APG) under the direction of the Research Committee (ASK). With this study, it is aimed to reveal the potential of the University in terms of volume/efficiency, quality and impact dimensions in the priority technology areas determined on a national scale.

With the establishment of the Vice Rectorate for Service to Society and Institutionalization Processes in December 2018, it is aimed to further encourage the contribution of the research conducted at Sabancı University to the socio-economic and socio-cultural structure and to evaluate the results. In the new Strategic Plan, “Increasing the Impact of Focused Global Problems and Sustainable Development Goals” was determined as the main objective, and it was aimed to develop research and education, which are the two main fields of activity of the university, in a way that would serve this main goal. In line with the New Strategic Plan, a new roadmap has also been devised for the establishment and evaluation of research centers that play a critical role in transforming research into service to society. The monitoring and evaluation process designed within the scope of this roadmap, which is planned to come into

effect in 2021, and the determination and periodic monitoring of the performance objectives of research centers constitute a good practice for strengthening the organizational structure.

A research study was initiated by the Dean of Faculty of Engineering and Natural Sciences (FENS) in 2020 in order to identify the basic problems and needs of FENS faculty members in research, to spot areas of development and to produce solutions.

The Integration Projects, which are among the supports included in the Sabancı University Research Process Incentives document, aim at meeting the priority needs of the new full-time faculty members (teaching staff/researchers) related to the research process and enabling them to start their innovative, early stage projects without losing time in order to be productive quickly. As of 31 December 2020, 21 integration projects with a total budget of 1.9 million TL are actively carried out within the university.

Prioritizing increasing and diversifying the share of external financing in its research and development activities, Sabancı University's active research funding, comprising national and international projects and provided by external financing institutions, reached 275 million TL as of 31 December 2020, while it was 187 million TL in the previous year. 51% of this fund comes from public resources, 20% from industrial establishments and the remaining part from other fund sources.

In order to ensure the sustainability of the research process, The "Personal Research Fund (KAF)" is given to faculty members, researchers, post-doctoral researchers and some visiting faculty members determined by faculties, so as to encourage an increase in the quality and quantity of all research activities and research outputs. The Personal Research Fund is given by the unit directors based on the research and artistic performance during the year, including the external funding sources obtained, and the fund can only be used for research activities. In addition to the KAF, since 2019, the Project Research Fund (PAF), a fund that can be used for research purposes and consists of the accumulation of the research staff budget in certain proportions and/or the remaining amounts in the projects, has been put into use. In this context, PAF pools have been created by transferring from staff budgets according to the preferences of the project coordinator and researchers in R&D projects. A total of 516 000 TL was transferred to the PAF fund from 11 projects carried out in 2020.

In 2020, the Scientific Publication Incentive process has been redesigned. With the funds allocated from the university's own resources, it is ensured that scientific publications are promoted with a focus on quality, thus resources are allocated for the research activities of the faculty members. The new system for the appreciation and encouragement of high-impact scientific publications came into force in 2020 and started to be implemented. In order to increase the volume of qualified research, the quality dimension has been brought to the fore by adding "the number of citations per publication", "the rate of publications within the scope of Q1" and "the rate of publications with international co-authors" among the indicators. All these plans and coordinated practices set a good example in terms of governing research processes at the University holistically and operating the PDCA cycle. In the 2019-2020 period, a total of 112 articles/compilations and 2 book chapters were entitled to be supported within the scope of the Scientific Publication Incentive system, and a total of 613 000 TL incentive payments were made for these publications. In the interviews made during the visit, it was stated that with these improvements, the publications in the 10% zone increased from 34% to 45%.

Within the scope of TUBITAK (The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey) 2244 Industry Doctorate Program, which is carried out jointly with industry, 19 projects from 2018, and 8 projects from 2019, are carried out, in which the university and

SUNUM (Sabancı University Nanotechnology Research and Application Center) are involved. In 2020, there was no call for the TÜBİTAK 2244 Industry Doctorate Program.

As of December 2020, the number of post-docs employed in Sabancı University faculties and centers is 58.

In order to further the interdisciplinary studies within the university, the Industry Cooperations and Technology Licensing Office (ILO) continues its activities to develop new national and international collaborations. Faculty members actively participate in different technology platforms such as the European Energy Research Alliance (EERA). With the Network Membership Support initiated by TÜBİTAK in 2020, membership processes for new networks were initiated.

With the Sabancı University Faculty Member Recruitment and Promotion Directive, which came into effect in 2019, new career paths were defined so that faculty members could focus on research and develop their research competencies. In the directive, solid criteria (number/quality of publications, number/size of projects, etc.) was introduced to evaluate research competencies and capacities of prospective and current faculty members. In addition, with the Sabancı University Faculty Member Career Development Path Selection Directive, which came into effect in 2020, faculty members were enabled to determine research and application-oriented or education-oriented career orientation preferences.

In addition to research supports, Sabancı University provides faculty members with the opportunity to use long-term leave for research purposes within the scope of the Academic Leaves of Absence Directive in order to encourage both theoretical and applied research. This directive was revised in 2020 and changes that would facilitate more research opportunities of faculty members were introduced.

The regular periodical performance evaluation process of current faculty members are carried out according to the “Academic Periodic Review Directive.” In addition, a new Academic Performance Evaluation System was established with the process initiated by APG at the end of 2019 with the initiative of the Rectorate.

Projelerin bütçe büyüklükleri, Horizon 2020 vb. Projects with international partnerships and big budget sizes such as Horizon 2020, etc. and projects that provide access to prestigious research funds such as the European Research Council (ERC) are followed and the increase in the number of such projects and taking part in large-budget consortia are encouraged. There was an increase in the number of projects with active external support in 2020 compared to 2019, and due to the increase in large-scale projects, an increase of 19% in the average project budget was realized.

Sabancı University, which strives to sustain its strengths in research and development, has seen the reflections of these efforts in the index rankings of universities in Turkey and around the world;

- According to the Entrepreneurial and Innovative University Index (GYÜE) 2019 and 2020 results, Sabancı University was ranked 2nd in 2019, and 4th in 2020. TÜBİTAK's standardization of data in the GYÜE rankings and differentiation in the rankings to support diversity caused changes in the rankings,
- Sabancı University scored 667.05 in the Middle East Technical University Informatics Institute University Ranking by Academic Performance (URAP) 2020-2021 ranking , In this context, Sabancı University has risen one position and is listed as 12th in the All Universities General Ranking compared to the previous year,
12. 3rd in the General Ranking of Foundation Universities, it has risen one position and listed as 12th in the

Universities General Ranking, 6th in the General Ranking of Universities Without a Faculty of Medicine, rising one position compared to last year, and 1st in the General Ranking of Universities with Less than 6000 Students.

- It is ranked in the 521-530 band in the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), one of the most prestigious university rankings in the world in 2021, in the 81-90 band in the Universities below 50 years Rankings, and is listed as 21th in the Developing European and Central Asian Countries University Rankings.
- Within the scope of Times Higher Education (THE), four rankings where Sabancı University is included in were in the 501-600 band in the 2021 World University Rankings, and it was ranked 3rd among universities from Turkey. Sabancı University ranks 69th in THE Young Universities 2020 Ranking, 40th in the Best Universities in Fast-Emerging Economies 2020 Ranking, and 48th in the Asian Universities 2020 Rankings.
- Sabancı University's programs and faculties are also included in the ranking systems.

These briefly summarized explanations show that Sabancı University Successfully carries out its works on the sustainability of its strengths that stand out in the 2018 IFR issued after the Institutional External Evaluation.

In the IFR, which was issued in 2018, in the field of Research and Development was evaluated as an area for improvement: “While the efforts of faculty members to develop performance criteria are appreciated, a more balanced consideration of field differences...”

Improvement works within the scope of areas for improvement can be summarized under three headings:

- With the Sabancı University Faculty Member Recruitment and Promotion Directive, which entered into force in 2019, the research performance of faculty members to be promoted is determined by the number/quality of publications, the number/size of projects, etc. for each faculty separately with numerical criteria. For example, in the Faculty of Engineering and Natural Sciences, the publication indicator was determined on the basis of the SNIP (Source Normalized Impact per Paper), which takes into account field-based differences. Similarly, in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, the evaluation for example, for the Economics program and the Visual Arts and Visual Communication Design program, is carried out with different types of files.
- With the Sabancı University Faculty Member Recruitment and Promotion Directive, which came into effect in 2020, new career paths were defined so that faculty members could focus on research and develop their research competencies. Thus, faculty members were given the opportunity to determine their preferences through processes carried out in their faculty. This opportunity has also been given to prospective faculty members at the university.
- The works about updating the Sabancı University Academic Periodic Review Directive, which is currently used to monitor the research performance of Sabancı University faculty members, through customized indicators that consider different academic titles, different faculty profiles, and different fields and faculties reached a significant point in 2020 and an Academic Performance Evaluation System that is transparent and measurable has been designed. The new Academic Performance Evaluation System, considers the differences between disciplines by using indicators and weights that vary depending on faculty and program.

With the progress resulting from improvements, the issue stated in the field of research and development in IFR 2018 **is no longer an area for improvement.**

SERVICE to SOCIETY

One of Sabancı University's greatest strengths is its Service to Society. In order to be able to make such a strong claim in an external evaluation/follow-up work, there must be solid evidence and also a system in place to ensure that this evidence will be sustainable. This evidence is given below.

The following words selected among the keywords of Sabancı University's institutional philosophy constitute the first evidence: *sensitivity to student/stakeholder requests, participation, concern for society, priority of implementation, developing science and technology, disseminating knowledge to society, local, regional, global.*

While Sabancı University has defined aims to maintain its leading role in education and research and to increase the volume of qualified research in order to solve the global and regional problems and educate human resources to solve these problems selected within the scope of Strategic Goals prepared in line with its goal **to transform society**, the University's new 2020-2025 Strategic Plan, which has been approved by a decision of the Board of Trustees, has been prioritized in relation to the main strategy of “Making a Global Difference” on Service to Society. Accordingly, the Strategic Goal No. 1 (SH1) is: **“Increasing the Impact on Focused Global Problems and Sustainable Development Goals”** and a university's determination of a strategy in line with the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations Agenda 2030 is the most concrete proof that it has internalized Service to Society.

The fact that all the Centers of the University are open to users not only from within Sabancı University but also from outside is another strong evidence. In addition, Civic Awareness Projects (CIP), which are regarded as the first works among the implementation examples compatible with the service to society strategy, continue to be developed as well as being an exemplary practice.

Another proof of sustainability is the establishment of the **Vice Rector office for Service to Society and Institutionalization Processes** at Sabancı University in December 2018, which is an exemplary practice especially to ensure the sustainability of the Service to Society function of the University. Finally, within this scope, the following seven units, operating within the University and affiliated to the established Vice Rector office, are permanent institutions that stand out in the society and have an independent visibility from Sabancı University: Istanbul Policy Center (IPC)

SU Gender and Women's Studies Application and Research Center (SU Gender)

Istanbul International Center for Energy and Climate (IICEC)

Education Reform Initiative (ERG)

Turkish Industry and Business Association (TUSİAD) Sabancı University Competition Forum (REF)

Financial Center of Excellence (CEF)

Institutional Governance Forum (CGFT)

Manager Development Unit (EDU)

In addition to the faculty and centers of the university, other centers and activities that provide service to society can be listed as the following; the research program for undergraduate students.

(Program for Undergraduate Research - PURE), Küçükköy Creative Technologies Workshop that works with public partnership, Sakıp Sabancı Museum, Karaköy Communication Center, Altunizade Digital campus, Kasa Gallery and Sabancı University Performance Center, which are open to not only Sabancı University, but also to external stakeholders and users, in short, to the society.

Many of the examples of service to society given above are no longer known as Sabancı University and have achieved national and international recognition. The work of these institutions or initiatives, which can create their own resources, has now become independent and autonomous from the University, in short, they have been made sustainable.

THE GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

In the external evaluation of Sabancı University in 2018, the understanding of continuity in management was clearly observed and its extension to other levels was indicated as an area of improvement. The method of the new Rector and the new secretary general, working with the previous administrator whose term of office has expired for a certain period, which started from the 1999 - 2000 period, was determined as an example of good practice and it was thought that it would be beneficial to extend this practice to the University. During the follow-up visit in 2021, it was observed that the same method of working with the previous manager started to be implemented with the new vice-rectors, academic and administrative unit managements, and with newly appointed deans, deputy deans and center directors as of 2019-2020. This method is the strongest proof that the university's governance system has been made sustainable.

In addition, in line with the strategic goals of the university, work on updating the performance system was initiated in line with the job evaluation study in 2020. Establishment of performance scorecards for those in senior management positions and a pool of key performance indicators for managers and subordinates are improvements in this context. The mentioned work is carried out by the Human Resources together with Korn Ferry consulting company. It is aimed that the new performance system will start to be implemented in September 2021 and contribute to the strategy of creating a high-performance culture, as well as make it sustainable by contributing to human resources management processes such as promotion, recruitment and compensation management.

Another area for improvement noted in the IFR in 2018 was the benefit to be gained from completing the writing of Academic Processes and integrating them with other management processes. Within the scope of the Extended Process Operations Project, which started in 2020 in line with the University's Strategic Goals, the integration of administrative and academic processes has been ensured, the duplication of works in the units has been simplified with digitalization, the administrative and academic processes in all units of the institution have been simplified, an office in Ankara has been opened to handle administrative and bureaucratic works faster and easier. The results are monitored by an Executive Committee, which includes the Rector, the Vice-Rector the Secretary General and the Human Resources Director.

The processes of the university are structured in three dimensions (Learning-Teaching, Research-Development and Service to Society) along with academic and administrative processes that will support these processes, and the processes are defined with a hierarchical

documentation in the form of process tags, regulations, directives and procedures. This documentation leaves no room for concern about the sustainability of governance processes.

The final improvement requirement regarding the Management System in mentioned in Sabancı University's IFR in 2018 is related to the integration of SAP, banner, LMS and ORACLE software used as IT support. The integration of numerous Information Management Systems used by the institution to carry out, monitor and report its governance and operational activities is an important improvement made since the Institutional External Evaluation visit. What shows that the improvement mentioned in the 2018 IFR regarding the integration requirement is sustainable is that the open source Postgresql database named ODS has been created for the reporting of Information Management systems from a single point. Personal data is transferred from this system to the SAP system, and it is used to feed data from the Student Information System (Banner (Oracle DB) about students, courses, teaching, display on websites, to different sources to the ODS environment. In addition, the graduate system is monitored with the CRM system and transferred to ODS. Other **evidence for sustainability** are the Patient Tracking application in the health center, course management system, graduate student selection application, flow of personal information to the research database from ODS, integration of the research database with Scopus in terms of publications.

Finally, another area for improvement that was mentioned in the IFR in 2018 is to increase the satisfaction of students regarding food and transportation services. In the ISER 2020, it was stated that in order to cater for the students' satisfaction and improvement needs regarding the food and transportation services arrangements were made about the food variety, taste and calorie balance, agreements were made with various catering companies to offer alternative meals to the students as of 2021, the transportation services were improved and the student shuttle reservation system was put into effect, IETT (public) buses are brought to the campus, the shuttle service schedules were arranged according to the course schedules, the price increases were held below inflation rates, and it has been reported that the service density and routes will be revised according to the demands. These improvements now stand out as strengths for Sabancı University.

CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION

The most solid indicator that Sabancı University pursues successful policies in line with its goal of becoming a university that can compete at the global level is its upward graph in national and international rankings. This result has been achieved by the internalization of the participatory and inclusive strategic planning approach by all stakeholders and its adoption by the University since its establishment. In this regard, regular cyclical works such as Search Conferences are reported and necessary improvements are made. There are many examples of good practice in which a quality system that provides quality assurance with a planned development and management approach has been established and internalized. However, the only thing that stands out as a minor improvement area is the need for a more analytical ISER format. Placing the evidence with a link in the report and eliminating the need for the downloading the evidence files multiple times under more than one heading will facilitate the work of the external evaluator and will also be the symbol of the quality assurance system that the University has internalized and made sustainable.

Sabancı University followed up the points identified as areas for improvement by the team during the first Institutional External Evaluation Visit held in 2018, in the subsequent Institutional Internal Evaluation works. The measures taken for improvement in ISER 2020 and their results are clearly presented with a table. The follow-up visit provided a detailed understanding of how these improvements were made and how sustainability was ensured, and emerged as a good practice example justifying the reason for the existence of THEQC. **All the points that were noted by the evaluation team as areas for improvement were turned into opportunities by the university and the board of trustees, and what was already good was further improved. *The dissemination of this approach will ensure the reform of higher education in Turkey.***

