

## COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT

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# YAŞAR UNIVERSITY

Period covered by this Communication on Engagement  
From: December 2017 To: December 2019

05 December 2019

### **Statement of Continued Support by the Rector of Yaşar University**

To our stakeholders,

I am pleased to confirm that Yaşar University reaffirms its support to the United Nations Global Compact and its Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption. This is our Communication on Engagement for the United Nations Global Compact. We welcome feedback on its contents.

In this Communication on Engagement, we describe the actions that our university has conducted to support the UN Global Compact and its Principles as suggested for an organization like our University. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Sincerely,

Prof. Dr. M. Cemali DİNÇER

## **Description of Actions and Measurement of Outcomes**

### **Introduction**

Yaşar University has been a devoted follower and disseminator of the UN Global Compact principles since its participation in the Compact. Yaşar University serves public interests and community not only by being abided by the principles but also doing research, developing academic interest and teaching the young and elder generations about these principles.

Since its foundation, Yaşar University has been committed to follow social responsibility norms which are embedded in the motto of the University as “Science, Unity, Success”. These norms are integrated into the strategic planning priorities of the university in the form of “human first” and “supremacy of ethical science” approaches. Hence, UN Global Compact principles related to human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption overlap with the founding and governing principles of the Yaşar University.

Yaşar University is an active participant of the UN Global Compact both at the local and international levels. Yaşar University has been represented at the annual meetings of the UN Global Compact Network Turkey. The University representatives have participated in several activities, including meetings and workshops organised by the UN Global Compact Türkiye. Yaşar University contributed to the international activities of the UN Global Compact, such as the Business for Peace (B4P) Annual Events convened in Istanbul and New York as well as the finalisation process of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the UN Headquarters.

Being an academic institution gives Yaşar University a broad spectrum of opportunities to contribute to the UN Global Compact Principles and the UN Sustainable Development Goals by disseminating information, teaching and developing projects about sustainability and social responsibility, and getting into cooperation with various stakeholders at the city, country, regional and international levels. As an academic institution with a quality faculty, committed administrative staff and dedicated students, Yaşar University disseminates information, develops projects and conducts teaching activities in relation to several SDGs including eradicating poverty, ensuring gender equality, creating means for affordable and clean energy, reducing inequities, contributing to climate action processes, helping transformation of urban environments into sustainable cities, working for peace, justice and strong institutions, and providing quality education.

Yaşar University actively contributes to promotion, dissemination and implementation of the UN Global Compact principles and the SDGs through its activities in the fields of education, social responsibility, life-long learning, migration, work place security and health, environmental protection, energy efficiency and anti-corruption. Yaşar University seeks to further integrate the values associated with the UN Global Compact Principles and the SDGs into its strategic plans and the future operations of the university.

## Implementation of the UN Global Compact Principles at Yaşar University

### 1. HUMAN RIGHTS

**Principle 1:** Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and

**Principle 2:** Make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

Promotion and implementation of human rights are essential for achieving sustainable development worldwide. For a transformative world vision, and a planet-centred and gender-sensitive just development, integrating human rights principles in all institutional activities are essential. In this regard, Yaşar University prioritizes promotion and implementation of human rights above all, and conducts the following actions:

#### 1.1. Education Activities at the Yaşar University

Having good quality education is one of the fundamental features necessary to improve people's lives and to ensure sustainability of development in general. Despite observing a progress towards an increase in access to education and improvement in the enrolment rates at schools, there is still significant room until globally achieving the SDG 4 education targets and there is a strong need for improvement in the skill sets of the university students within the higher education system.

In order to contribute to the improvement of overall intellectual progress of its students and the wider public, Yaşar University conducts the following activities:

#### *Department of Science Culture and Foundation Courses Program*

Universities should provide and stimulate an intellectual environment where both science and critical thinking is promoted and encouraged. Universities should both teach and cherish this principle, opening a door to a richer way of life, where people are more in tune with their surroundings.

At Yaşar University it is anticipated that through acquiring certain fundamental skills, students will have the chance to recognise and internalize the values of the university, expressed in its motto: 'Science, Unity, Success'. It is also expected that through the nurturing environment of the university, students will increase their thirst for learning and success, through personally experiencing this respectful approach to life. In this regard, Yaşar University has established a specific department, called "Department of Science Culture" that has interdisciplinary features and provides teaching and training to improve theoretical understanding of scientific theories and their practical implementations.

The courses developed by the Department of Science Culture include "Yaşar University Foundation Courses Program". The courses aim to provide specific information about various intellectual perspectives and improve the necessary ability, skill, attitude, interest, habits and the social responsibility of the students. They differ from the "compulsory lessons", determined by the Council of Higher Education. They also diverge from the "specialized" and "elective" courses offered in the students' regular study programs. However, they are in harmony and coordination with various academic programs offered at the university. The courses adopt the methods and principles of science and aim to provide awareness about philosophy and art as well as social responsibility. Yaşar University offers these courses both in Turkish and English in consistent with the universal educational standards.

Starting with the 2012-2013 academic year, the courses have integrated the facilities provided by the Open and Distance Learning. The courses are offered under two main categories: "Philosophy Courses" and "Activity Courses".

The courses under the “Philosophy Courses” category teach the university’s scientific assertions. They reflect the institutional, academic and cultural values of Yaşar University, its essential principles and the methodology needed to adopt the philosophical basis of these principles. The courses under the “Activity Courses” category are practice-based courses where students find solutions to actual, real-life problems out of the university campus, by forming multi-disciplinary study groups. The purpose is to improve students’ awareness of real-life problems as well as their skills to offer solutions to them.

The classes (both in English and Turkish) offered under the Yaşar University Foundation Courses Program are as follows:

- UFND 1010 Davranış Bilimleri (Behavioural Sciences)
- UFND 1110 Anlam ve Göstergebilim (UFND 1120 Semiology and Semantics)
- UFND 1410 Felsefe Mantık (UFND 1420 Philosophy-Logic)
- UFND 2010 Araştırma Kültürü (UFND 2020 Research Culture)
- UFND 3010 Tasarım Kültürü (UFND 3020 Design Culture)
- UFND 4010 Estetik Kültürü (UFND 4020 Aesthetic Culture)
- UFND 5010 Etik Kültürü (UFND 5020 Ethic Culture)
- UFND 6010 Proje Kültürü (UFND 6020 Project Culture)
- UFND 6110 Girişimcilik ve İş planlaması (UFND 6120 Entrepreneurship and Business Planning)
- UFND 6210 Sürdürülebilirlik (UFND 6220 Sustainability)
- UFND 7010 Sosyal Sorumluluk (UFND 7020 Social Responsibility)

### ***Courses on Human Rights and Discrimination***

Recognizing the importance of providing specialized courses about human rights and discrimination, Yaşar University Faculty of Human and Social Sciences offers the following classes:

**1. IR 3355 Human Rights:** The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the concept of human rights from a theoretical and empirical perspective. As part of this course, fundamental human rights developments are studied and human rights issues are examined from a legal, political and ethical viewpoint.

**2. PRAD 0040 Discrimination Studies:** The purpose of this course is to develop an understanding about theories concerning prejudice and discrimination including ageism, racism, sexism, heterosexism, and homophobia. As a part of this course, students understand the nature of prejudice and discrimination and discuss the issue from a theoretical and historical perspective.

### **1.2. Social Responsibility Programs at Yaşar University**

Social Responsibility is an ethical framework that calls upon individuals, entities, groups and institutions to act responsibly, and fulfil their civic duties towards the society. In order to disseminate the teaching and integration of this principle, Yaşar University offers a specific course on Social Responsibility under the Foundation Courses Program, has founded Social Responsibility Community, and conducts various projects, such as “İzmir’de İyilik Var”. Due to its active support to the various social responsibility programs, Yaşar University has been accepted to be part of the National Volunteering Committee, established through the initiative of the United Nations Turkey. Yaşar University is the first ever university in Turkey that has been invited to be part of the National Volunteering Committee.

### ***UFND 7010 Social Responsibility Course***

The purpose of the Social Responsibility Course is to enable students to learn about the society and develop social awareness by taking part in a social responsibility project. The students develop and implement a social responsibility project outside of the campus and enhance their experience in team-

building, project coordination and implementation. The course teaches both the basic principles of social responsibility and the methodology required for the application of these principles in real-life.

Social Responsibility has been devised as Yaşar University's institutional scientific identity assertions. Hence, the course is a compulsory course for all university students. It is offered both in English and Turkish.

Learning outcomes of the courses are:

To understand and discuss the principles of social responsibility

To express a social problem

To develop a social project with a team

To manage the defined phases of projects

To apply the philosophical basis of social responsibility principles

The projects conducted by the students as a part of the Social Responsibility Course include helping high-school students with their classes, painting the community walls in different parts of the city, preparing houses for stray animals, providing clothes, toys and necessary equipment to the children in underprivileged parts of Turkey, and recording short films in various parts of Izmir.

### ***Social Responsibility Community of Yaşar University***

Yaşar University aims to disseminate social responsibility principles among its students, and encourages them to engage in related projects. Hence, the students of Yaşar University have organized themselves under the roof of "Social Responsibility Community" which organizes several events throughout the academic year. The community is active since 2011. The events organized by the Social Responsibility Community includes the following: Toy Studio, "Game is Our Business" project, Orientation Days, "Turkish Sign Language" Studio, and Yoga.

### ***Social Responsibility Projects: "İzmir'de İyilik Var"***

Yaşar University actively supports the dissemination of social responsibility spirit outside of the university. Hence, Yaşar University cooperates with several actors, such as the Izmir municipality, civil society actors and international organizations for organizing social responsibility projects at the city, and region levels. One of the principle examples among these projects is called "İzmir'de İyilik Var (There is Goodwill in Izmir)", which is organized by the professors at Yaşar University in cooperation with Izmir municipality and various local civil society organizations. The event is organized for the 4<sup>th</sup> time in Izmir in 2019, and the topic is "Terrestrial life and Deforestation."

### **1.3. Yaşar University as an Accessible University**

Yaşar University campus has been designed with the aim of providing equal access to all individuals to reach every point in the campus without any problems. Yaşar University is an example of a barrier-free university where there are no barriers to participate in the university life equally.

The significant efforts of Yaşar University for providing equal access and participation opportunities to all individuals have been recognized by the Council of Higher Education. The Council of Higher Education has granted certificates for acknowledging the accessibility of Yaşar University in three spheres; namely the Orange Flag for Accessibility in Space, the Green Flag for Accessibility of Education, and the Blue Flag for Accessibility of Socio-cultural Events.

### ***Disabled Students Unit***

For the purpose of minimizing the limitations affecting academic and social life in the campus, Yaşar University founded the Disabled Student Unit.

Disabled Students Unit makes arrangements within the university in order to create an accessible university for all students and the staff. The Unit identifies the obstacles against equal access to university life and implements the measures against them. The identification of the obstacles against equal participation in the university life is conducted with the participation of the disabled students by taking into account the specific needs of each student. Principally, the unit focuses on the obstacles related to campus infrastructure and access to course materials and the learning/working environment which are essential for equal participation in the university life.

### ***Barrier-Free Living Community***

For creating an accessible university environment without any barriers, Yaşar University students have established the “Barrier-Free Living Community”. The community organizes various events, such as conferences, events, seminars and documentary screenings, to raise awareness about the significance of creating a university environment accessible for everybody.

### **1.4. Life Long Learning at Yaşar University**

Life-long learning enhances social inclusion, promotes community development, supports active citizenship and increases the chances of employability. Yaşar University supports life-long learning through its Continuing Education Center.

### ***Yaşar University Continuing Education Center (YUCEC)***

Yaşar University Continuing Education Center is established to meet the needs of lifelong learning, in-service training and personal training. YUCEC organizes various educational programs, courses, seminars and conferences for individuals, public and private sector, and international institutions. Its mission is to provide participants with new information and skills, by integrating theory and practice. YUCEC organizes various certificate courses on many topics, such as career planning, personal development, foreign languages, theatre, ceramic, music, and cooking.

In addition, YUCEC designs education programs to meet the specific needs of corporates and institutions. The examples of corporates and institutions for which YUCEC has organised education programs include Vestel, Grundfos Pompa, Izmir Gaz, Izmir Commodity Exchange, Aras Kargo, Mazhar Zorlu Holding, Izmir St. Joseph French High School, and Selçuk Municipality.

### **1.5. Chairs on Migration**

Migrants and refugees are among the most vulnerable to human rights violations, including economic and social exploitation, exclusion, discrimination and abuse. Yaşar University Faculty of Human and Social Sciences has developed significant knowledge and experience in the area of migration studies. As a recognition of these efforts, Yaşar University has been granted with the UNESCO Chair on International Migration (2016-2020) and Jean Monnet Chair on “Migration in Turkey-European Union Relations” (2019-2022). The principle purpose of these chairs is to establish dialogue and collaboration between policy-makers and academics working on migration.

## **2. LABOUR**

**Principle 3:** Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

**Principle 4:** the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;

**Principle 5:** the effective abolition of child labour; and

**Principle 6:** the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

For ensuring equality and social progress, all employees around the world should have safe and decent working conditions. All forms of child labour as well as forced and compulsory labour should be abolished. Businesses should respect the freedom of association and employees should be able to implement the right to collective bargaining.

For Yaşar University, ensuring smooth implementation of employees' rights and providing safe and healthy working conditions are top priorities. Yaşar University puts utmost importance to the protection of employees' rights according to Turkish Labour Law as well as international labour standards.

## **2.1. Workplace Health and Security Unit**

As part of the efforts to ensure safety and wellbeing of the employees at Yaşar University Workplace Security and Health Unit is founded. This unit aims to optimize working conditions and technological tools at the university for the purpose of supporting social, physiological and physical conditions of the employees. The unit puts the "human factor" at the core of its actions, spreads the awareness about the importance of security and health at the workplace in order to prevent undesirable events which may threaten health and security of the employees and the students.

## **2.2. ISG 9110 and ISG 9219 Occupational Health and Security Courses**

As required by the Council of Higher Education, Yaşar University offers two courses about occupational health and security: ISG 9110 and ISG 9210.

## **3. ENVIRONMENT**

**Principle 7:** Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;

**Principle 8:** Undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility;

**Principle 9:** Encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

The planet is facing unprecedented environmental challenges, including climate change, food shortages, biodiversity loss and water and energy insufficiencies. Hence, environmental protection and efficient use of energy are central for promotion of sustainable development. In this regard, universities should take the lead for spreading environmental awareness, teach the public and the private sector about the necessary environmental precautions and implement these measures within the campus.

In order to create a sustainable campus, Yaşar University is committed to continuously improving the energy performance in the campus. In this regard, Yaşar University efficiently uses energy and water in all activities at the campus; defines energy consumption targets and continuously updates and monitors them; performs regular energy efficiency audits for defining the possibilities of energy efficiency improvement; follows new legislation about energy and water use and meets their requirements; conducts trainings and seminars about energy efficiency and environmental protection; includes energy performance assessment and improvement at the design phase of new projects; and, purchases and utilizes energy-efficient products and services.

As a recognition of the efforts of Yaşar University in implementing energy efficiency at its campus, Yaşar University has become the first university in Turkey to receive the Energy Management Certificate (TS- EN-ISO 50001).

### **3.1. Department of Energy Systems Engineering**

For disseminating knowledge about efficient energy use and production, Yaşar University has founded the department of Energy Systems Engineering. The department offers an undergraduate degree in Energy Systems Engineering since 2012-2013 academic year. The education language is English. The

curriculum consists of various energy-related courses in the fields of mechanical and electric-electronic engineering.

### **3.2. MSc in Energy Management**

At the graduate level, Graduate School of Natural and Applied Sciences offers a master program in Energy Management. The program is offered in Turkish. The purpose of the program is to train experts who are equipped with the knowledge of energy technology and management, and who can produce sustainable solutions for reducing energy consumption.

### **3.3. Energy Productivity and Management Coordination Board**

For effectively improving the energy performance at the campus, Energy Productivity and Management Coordination Board is founded. The Board is active since 2014. It is composed of 7 members and one academic advisor. The purpose of the board is to raise awareness about energy efficiency within and outside of the campus and to support educational activities in the field. For instance, the Board facilitated the organization of a summer course at Yaşar University in 2018, which is called “Exergy and Its Applications”

### **3.4. Energy Efficiency and Management Student Community**

Energy Efficiency and Management Student Community is established by the Yaşar University students to raise awareness about energy efficiency and sustainability both within Yaşar University community and the wider public. The Community is active since 2015. It organizes various events and technical visits with the purpose of disseminating knowledge about energy efficiency and management.

## **4. ANTI-CORRUPTION**

**Principle 10:** Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

Yaşar University has always been a committed supporter of universal ethics and principles about anti-corruption. Yaşar University avoids all forms of bribery and extortion, and proactively implements the principle of transparency in all of its internal actions.

Yaşar University’s operations and governance is audited by the Council of Higher Education.