The Higher Education Planning, Evaluation, Accreditation and Coordination Council

Higher Education in the TRNC: Challenges and Future Perspectives

Prof. Dr. Aykut Hocanın
President of YÖDAK

Governance and regulatory oversight



Founded in 1993 within the Ministry of Education

Independent Council in 2005

Status updated in the Higher Education Law which was amended in 2009 and 2017

Duties and Responsibilities

Planning

Evaluation

Accreditation

Coordination: Inter-university Academic Coordination Council

Administrative Structure

Equivalency Unit

Education Unit

Legal Unit

Financial Unit

Archive

YÖKSİS Higher Education Digital System

International Memberships

Affiliate of enqa.

UK ENIC
Services provided by Ecctis

apqn
ASIA-PACIFIC QUALITY NETWORK

EENQA

INQAAHE
Since 1991

IQA
Association of Quality Assurance Agencies of the Islamic World

Legislation: Laws and Regulations

65/2005 TRNC Higher Education Law

1. Regulation on Admission, Registration and Transfer of International Students (Updated on August 2024)
2. Regulation on the Recognition of Overseas Higher Education Diplomas in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC)
3. Regulation on Program Evaluation and Accreditation Criteria for Higher Education Institutions in the TRNC.
4. Regulation on Preliminary Permission to Open Programs and Permission to Start Education at Higher Education Institutions in the TRNC
5. Regulation on the Supervision of Higher Education Institutions
6. Ethics Coordination Regulation of the Higher Education Planning, Evaluation, Accreditation and Coordination Council
7. Regulation on Student Admission and Registration Requirements for Higher Education Institutions in the TRNC.
8. Regulation on Promotion and Appointment to Faculty Membership at Higher Education Institutions in TRNC

National Qualifications framework and ECTS

Component	Framework
NQF levels 1–4	Ministry of Education responsibility
NQF levels 5–8	YÖDAK responsibility for higher education
ECTS workload	60 ECTS credits for a full academic year
Mobility	Credit recognition through institutional arrangements

Bologna-aligned academic provision

Degree architecture	Short-cycle provision and the three main cycles support comparable qualifications.
Learning outcomes	Programmes define the knowledge, skills and competencies students should demonstrate at completion.
Academic transparency	Diploma Supplements, credit systems and institutional agreements support comparability and mobility.

Academic Programs

352

Associate (2-3 years)

800

Bachelors (4 years)

418

Masters (2 years)

205

PhD (3-5 years)

YÖDAK-approved 1775 programs

Student Profile

106,000 students from 150 countries.

88,000 students (active registration)

10%

TRNC

55%

Türkiye

35%

International

Faculty Member Profile

838	Professors
531	Associate Professors
2190	Assistant Professors
1494	Teaching Staff members
498	Assistants

Total of 5551 Academic Members

Recognition, accreditation and rankings

Recognition	An authority recognises an institution or qualification under its own rules.
Accreditation	An external body evaluates a specified institution or program within a defined criteria and validity period Program Institutional
Rankings and ratings	Comparative or scored assessments use distinct methodologies.

Universities Recognition Status: YÖDAK and YÖK

1	Eastern Mediterranean University (1979)	State	YÖDAK, YÖK, EUA member
2	Girne American University (1985)	Foundation	YÖDAK, YÖK
3	Near East University (1988)	Foundation	YÖDAK, YÖK, EUA member
4	European University of Lefke (1989)	State/Foundation	YÖDAK, YÖK
5	Cyprus International University (1997)	Foundation	YÖDAK, YÖK, EUA member
6	Akdeniz Karpaz University (2012)	Foundation	YÖDAK, YÖK
7	University of Kyrenia (2013)	Foundation	YÖDAK, YÖK
8	Cyprus Aydın University (2013)	Foundation	YÖDAK, YÖK
9	Cyprus American University (2014)	Foundation	YÖDAK, YÖK
10	Final International University (2015)	Foundation	YÖDAK, YÖK

11	Cyprus West University (2015)	Foundation	YÖDAK, YÖK
12	Rauf Denktaş University (2015)	Foundation	YÖDAK, YÖK
13	Ada Kent University (2016)	Foundation	YÖDAK, YÖK
14	Cyprus Health and Social Sciences University (2016)	Foundation	YÖDAK, YÖK
15	Bahçeşehir Cyprus University (2017)	Foundation	YÖDAK, YÖK
16	Arkın University of Creative Arts and Design (2017)	Foundation	YÖDAK, YÖK
17	European Leadership University (2017)	Foundation	YÖDAK
18	Altınbaş Cyprus University (2017)	Foundation	YÖDAK
19	Onbeş Kasım Cyprus University (2017)	Foundation	YÖDAK
20	International University of Alasia (2019)	Foundation	YÖDAK
21	Middle East Technical University, North Cyprus Campus	State (Türkiye)	YÖK
22	Istanbul Technical University, North Cyprus Campus	State (Türkiye)	YÖK
23	Ankara University of Social Sciences, North Cyprus Campus	State (Türkiye)	YÖK

Universities Accreditation Status

Eastern Mediterranean University (1979)

ABET (Civil Engineering B.S, Computer Engineering B.S, Electrical & Electronic Engineering B.S, Industrial Engineering B.S, Management Engineering B.S, Mechanical Engineering B.S, Mechatronics Engineering B.S, Software Engineering B.S)

ACPE (M. Pharm., Pharm D.)

AQAS (Interior Architecture, B.A)

ASIIN (Molecular Biology and Genetics B.A, Medical Biotechnology Masters, Biomedical Equipment Technology Associate Degree, Biomedical Equipment Technology Higher Diploma, Construction Technology Associate Degree, Electrical and Electronics Technology Associate Degree, Electrical and Electronics Technology Higher Diploma, Information Technology B.S, Mapping and Cadastral Survey Associate Degree, Information Technology without Thesis (Master of Technology), Information Technology with Thesis, Computer Programming Associate Degree, Computer Programming Higher Diploma Program)

CIDA (Interior Architecture, B.A)

EPDAD (Music Teaching Bachelor's Degree, Special Education Teaching Bachelor's Degree)

Eastern Mediterranean University (1979)

EAQUALS (Foreign Languages and English Preparatory School)

TPD (Bachelor of Psychology)

TEDQUAL (Tourism and Hospitality)

SABAK (Nutrition and Dietetics, Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation)

EQANIE (Information Technology BA, Information Technology with/without thesis)

FIBAA (Bachelor’s programs in Banking and Insurance, Finance and Banking, International Finance, Business Administration, Human Resources Management, International Trade and Business, Management Information Systems, Marketing, Public Administration, Economics, International Relations, Political Science).

MİAK & NAAB (Architecture)

PCN (Pharmacy)

TEPDAD (Medicine)

European University of Lefke (1989)

AQAS Institutional Accreditation, 2026

AHPGS (Finance and Banking, Economics, Political Science and Public Administration, Health Management, Pharmacy, Nursing, Tourism Management, Physiotherapy & Rehabilitation, Psychology, Nutrition & Dietetics)

AQAS (Architecture, Interior Architecture and Environmental Design, Horticulture, New Media and Communication)

ASIIN (Electronics and Communications Engineering, Software Engineering, Management Information Systems),

EPDAD (English Language Teaching, Guidance and Psychological Counseling, Classroom Teaching, Special Education Teaching, Primary School Mathematics Teaching, Turkish Language Teaching, Preschool Teaching)

FEDEK (Psychology)

FIBAA (Business, International Relations)

MÜDEK (Computer Engineering, Civil Engineering, Electrical and Electronics Engineering)

SABAK (Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation, Nutrition and Dietetics)

EUR-ACE (Computer Engineering, Electrical and Electronics Engineering, Electronics and Communications Engineering, Civil Engineering)

Cyprus International University (1997)

AHPGS (Pharmacy (M. Pharm, Pharm. D), Molecular Biology and Genetics, Nutrition and Dietetics, Nutrition and Dietetics, Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation, Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation English, Law)

MÜDEK (Computer Engineering, Electrical and Electronics Engineering, Industrial Engineering, Civil Engineering)

EPDAD (English Language Teaching, Preschool Teaching, Special Education Teaching, Guidance and Psychological Counseling)

FEDEK (Psychology)

MİAK (Architecture)

FIBAA (Business Administration, Accounting and Finance, International Relations, Public Relations and Advertising, Visual Communication Design, Tourism and Hotel Management, Management Information Systems)

İLAD (Public Relations and Advertising, Radio, Television and Cinema)

İLEDAK (Communication Education Evaluation and Accreditation Board)

SABAK Nutrition and Dietetics, Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation

Girne American University (1985)

EAQUALS (Foundation English School)

IACBE (Business Administration Master's Programs, Banking and Finance, Marketing, Information Systems Management, Business Administration, International Business Management, Business Administration (Master's), Economics (Master's), Banking and Finance (Bachelor's), Marketing (Bachelor's), Accounting (Bachelor's), Information Systems Management (Bachelor's), Business Administration (Bachelor's), Economics (Bachelor's), International Business Management (Bachelor's), Banking and Insurance (Associate Degree), Marketing (Associate Degree), Accounting and Tax Practices (Associate Degree), Business Administration (Associate Degree))

Cyprus Aydın University (2013)

EAQUALS (English Preparatory School)

Final International University (2015)

EPDAD (English Language Teaching)

Arkın University of Creative Arts and Design (2017)

EAQUALS (English Preparatory School)
İLAD (Visual Communication Design, New Media and Communication)

Bahçeşehir Cyprus University (2017)

EAQUALS (English Preparatory School)

Rauf Denktaş University (2015)

FIBAA (International Law)

Universities Ranking Status

Eastern Mediterranean University (1979)

THE WUR: 601-800 (2024, 2025, 2026), 701-800 (2027)

THE YUR Rank: 151 (2024)

Shanghai Ranking (GRAS), Hospitality and Tourism Management Band: #51-75 (2025). Research THE Sustainability Impact Ranking: 201-300 (2022, 2023), 301-401 (2024, 2025), 401-600 (2026)

QS World University (Institutional) Ranking Bands: #611-620 (2025), #691 (2026, 2027).

QS Stars Rating System – Overall 4* (2025) – 5* in Global Engagement and Facilities

QS Sustainability Ranking: #1101-1150 (2024), #868 (2025), #871 (2026)

QS Subject Ranking (2026): Hospitality and Leisure Management #151-175 Band, Economics and Econometrics #501-550 Band, Electrical and Electronic Engineering #501-550 Band, Computer Science and Information Systems #751-800 Band.

US News Best Global Universities: : #1148 (2021), #901 (2022), #782 (2023), #687 (24/25), #875 (26/27)

Near East University (1988)

THE WUR 601-800 (2024, 2025), 401-500 (2026), 501-550 (2027)

THE YUR rank: 139 (2024)

THE Sustainability Impact Ranking: 43 (2025), 39 (2026)

Shanghai Ranking Subjects: Physics 301-400, Mathematics 401-500

QS World University (Institutional) Ranking: Band 791-800 (2027)

QS Sustainability Ranking: #1101-1150 (2026)

US News Best Global Universities: #689 (2025), #681 (2026), #859 (2027)

European University of Lefke (1989)

THE WUR: 601-650 (2027)

QS World University Ranking: Band 851-900 (2026), 901-950 (2027)

QS Subject Economics & Econometrics: Band 451-500 (2026)

QS University Sustainability Rankings: Band 1031-1040 (2026)

QS Stars Rating 5* (Current)

Cyprus International University (1997)

THE WUR: 601-800 (2025, 2026), 651-700 (2027)

THE YUR Band: 201-250 (2024, 2025, 2026)

QS Sustainability Ranking Band: 1201+ (2024, 2025), 1101-1150 (2026)

US News Best Global Universities: #615 (2027)

THE World University Rankings - Summary

Different frameworks

THE and QS world rankings, subject rankings, sustainability assessments and star ratings evaluate different dimensions.

University	2024	2025	2026	2027
Eastern Mediterranean University	601–800	601–800	601–800	701–800
Near East University	601–800	601–800	401–500	501–550
European University of Lefke	—	—	—	601–650
Cyprus International University	—	601–800	601–800	651–700

QS rankings - Summary

University	2025	2026	2027
Eastern Mediterranean University	611-620	691	691
Near East University	—	—	791-800
European University of Lefke	—	851-900	901–950

YÖKAK Institutional Accreditation

- 11 TRNC Universities have applied for Institutional Accreditation from YÖKAK: International Institutional Accreditation Program (IIAP)
- IIAP is based on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) principles.
- Evaluation is based on
  - governance and quality
  - learning and teaching
  - Research and development,
  - service to society

Main Features

Cross-Border Evaluation: Conducted based on the THEQC IIAP Evaluation Criteria, adhering to the ESG standards.

Self-Evaluation: Emphasizes the Institution’s self-evaluation.

Quality Assurance: Examines and monitors the effectiveness of quality assurance practices.

Continuous Improvement: Focuses on aligning with the institution’s mission, vision, and strategic objectives.

Peer-Review: Incorporates feedback from both internal and external stakeholders.

At the end of a successful accreditation the accredited universities will be listed on the The European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) website.

A planned, regulated higher education area

Quality is the goal.

Planning	Align programmes and research capacity with societal needs and long-term priorities.
Evaluation	Apply clear criteria, monitor compliance and improve the quality of teaching and research.
Accreditation	Strengthen external quality assurance and follow up agreed improvement actions.
Coordination	Advance local and international collaboration in education, research and quality assurance.
Digital tools	Use YÖKSİS, reliable institutional data and digital workflows for planning, monitoring and follow-up.

Thank you