

## **THEY TOOK TURKISH CUISINE TO THE WORLD STAGE: INTERNATIONAL SUCCESSES BY IGU STUDENTS**

Students of Istanbul Gelisim University (IGU) drew attention with their achievements at the 22nd International Istanbul Gastronomy Festival, one of the most prestigious gastronomy events in Türkiye. Competing in two separate team categories at the university level, IGU students achieved remarkable success by winning gold medals in both categories. Held between December 17–20, 2025 at the Bahçelievler Convention Center, the festival was organized under the leadership of the Turkish Chefs Federation (TAŞFED) in cooperation with the World Association of Chefs' Societies (WACS). Bringing together numerous professional chefs, academics, and students at national and international levels, the event provided a shared platform for current gastronomic approaches and practical skills.

### **GOLD MEDAL IN MODERN TURKISH CUISINE**

On December 20, 2025, Istanbul Gelisim University students earned a gold medal with their performance in the JP10 – University-Level Modern Turkish Cuisine Team Competition.

Representing IGU in the competition were Yahya Osman Çalışkan, Ahmet Efe Köylü, and Kaan İnci. The team presented a menu that blended the principles of modern Turkish cuisine with traditional flavors. The menu featured Sivas madımak with Mengen cheese balls as the appetizer, lamb Karski with lamb tripe mushroom couscous as the main course, and crispy pumpkin baklava with tahini sauce for dessert.

The menu was evaluated based on originality, technical execution, flavor harmony, and presentation, and was awarded a gold medal. This achievement highlighted the students' competence in combining the deep-rooted heritage of Turkish cuisine with contemporary gastronomic techniques.

The students' disciplined work ethic, intensive preparation process, and practice-oriented education model played a key role in this success. The gastronomy education offered at IGU addressing technical proficiency, aesthetic perspective, and teamwork in a holistic manner was considered one of the most significant factors behind this achievement.

## FULL MARKS FROM THE JURY FOR ORIGINAL MENUS

Within the scope of the festival, two separate teams representing Istanbul Gelisim University also competed in the JPT 2 – Best University Team of the Year Competition and were awarded gold medals following the jury’s evaluations. The teams were assessed based on technical competence, flavor balance, presentation aesthetics, time management, and teamwork.

The first team consisted of Mevlüt Ubeyde Can, Onurcan Öçeş, and Emine Toraman, while the second team included Emrullah Saraç, Umutcan Yılmaz, and Şeyma Nur Bayrak. With their original menus, IGU teams received full marks from the jury and were recognized among the standout university teams of the festival.

The gold medals earned by Istanbul Gelisim University students in different categories within the same festival were regarded as a concrete indicator of the university’s practice-based, interdisciplinary, and quality-oriented education approach in the field of gastronomy.

## YOK 2025 REPORT RELEASED: IGU’S MULTIDIMENSIONAL ACADEMIC SUCCESS OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED

The “University Monitoring and Evaluation General Report–2025,” prepared by the Council of Higher Education (YÖK), has been published. The report presents the performance of universities in Türkiye across many dimensions, from academic output and internationalization to accessibility and quality assurance. According to the report, Istanbul Gelisim University ranked 1st nationwide in the number of “Patent, Utility Model, or Design” applications, achieving a significant success. The report also shows that Istanbul Gelisim University ranked among the top 20 universities in categories such as the number of accredited undergraduate programs, employment of international faculty members, international awards, and accessible library resources for individuals with disabilities.

## ISTANBUL GELISIM UNIVERSITY AT THE TOP IN PATENT APPLICATIONS

According to the data in the University Monitoring and Evaluation General Report–2025, Istanbul Gelisim University ranked 1st across Türkiye in the number of Patent, Utility Model, or Design applications. This result demonstrates the university’s strong capacity for research, innovation, and the production of commercially viable academic outputs.

## THE UNIVERSITY WITH THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF ACCREDITED UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS AMONG FOUNDATION UNIVERSITIES

Based on data from the 2024 YKS guide, universities were ranked by the number of accredited undergraduate programs. With 44 internationally accredited undergraduate programs, Istanbul Gelisim University ranked 3rd nationwide and 1st among foundation universities. The report noted that this picture is one of the important indicators showing that accreditation is becoming increasingly decisive for both state and foundation universities.

## MULTIDIMENSIONAL PERFORMANCE FROM IGU

According to the report, Istanbul Gelisim University is also among the universities employing the highest number of international faculty members as of 2024. With 49 international faculty members, IGU ranked 11th nationwide and 5th among foundation universities in this category.

In terms of internationally received awards, IGU ranked 15th nationwide and 9th among foundation universities with 14 international awards.

Regarding the number of audiobooks and accessible digital resources available in university libraries, Istanbul Gelisim University ranked 20th nationwide and 8th among foundation universities with 329,006 resources. The report emphasized that universities possessing resources at the level of hundreds of thousands or millions have become strategic centers in terms of accessibility and inclusivity.

## “WE ARE BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE HIGHER EDUCATION MODEL”

Commenting on the results achieved in the report published by YÖK, Istanbul Gelisim University Rector Prof. Bahri Şahin stated:

“The results obtained in this report published by the Council of Higher Education reveal that Istanbul Gelisim University is striving to realize its goal of becoming a research university through a holistic ecosystem approach. Ranking first nationwide in patent applications is a concrete outcome of our strategic approach that places university–industry collaboration at the center and transforms research into commercially viable outputs.

Our position among the top three universities in accreditation, internationalization, and accessibility indicators shows that we are building a sustainable higher education model that simultaneously addresses quality assurance, global academic interaction, and social responsibility. As Istanbul Gelisim University, we will continue in the coming period to strengthen this ecosystem shaped around research, innovation, and internationalization, and to contribute to our country's higher education and R&D capacity."

## **STATE DECORATION FROM UZBEKISTAN AWARDED TO AN ISTANBUL GELISIM UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC**

In the Republic of Uzbekistan, the "Symbol of Uzbekistan" Breast Badge awarded to successful young individuals who stand out with a strong sense of patriotism grounded in national spirituality, cultural heritage, and universal values, and who contribute to the country's prestige and reputation was presented to its recipients at a formal ceremony. Within this scope, Jumayev Ergash Ro'zimuradovich, Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences of Istanbul Gelisim University, was deemed worthy of this prestigious decoration in recognition of his exemplary patriotism on the international stage, his devoted efforts, and his effective activities aimed at enhancing the honor, dignity, and reputation of Uzbekistan.

### **PRESENTED AT STATE LEVEL**

The "Symbol of Uzbekistan" Breast Badge was presented at a ceremony held by the Chair of the Youth Policy Council of Uzbekistan, the Minister of Youth Affairs, and the President of the Youth Union of Uzbekistan. The badge is awarded to individuals who play an active role in the country's socio-political life, demonstrate a strong sense of social responsibility, and serve as role models for young people.

## THE COUNTRY’S FIRST OFFICIAL BREAST BADGE

Adopted by a Presidential decree in 1997, the “Symbol of Uzbekistan” Breast Badge holds the distinction of being the country’s first official breast badge. It aims to encourage entrepreneurial, self-sacrificing, and patriotic individuals who actively contribute to the nation’s domestic and international life. This recognition is regarded as a tangible demonstration of support for young people’s commitment to national values and their work on the international stage.

## CONTRIBUTION TO INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC VISIBILITY

Asst. Prof. Jumayev Ergash Ro’zimuradovich’s receipt of this meaningful award once again highlights Istanbul Gelisim University’s international academic influence and its scientific and social contributions on a global scale. IGU continues to support and promote the internationally recognized achievements of its academics.

## **ALUMNI REUNION EVENT HELD AT IGU: MOVING TOWARD THE FUTURE WITH A STRONG ALUMNI NETWORK**

The Alumni Reunion event organized by the Alumni Relations Coordination Office of Istanbul Gelisim University (IGU) was held with the participation of approximately 500 graduates from different academic years. Hosted on campus, the gathering brought alumni together to relive shared memories while once again demonstrating IGU’s sustainable and strong relationship with its graduates. The event was attended by Abdülkadir Gayretli, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of IGU; Vice Rector Prof. Arda Öztürkcan, Secretary General Assoc. Prof. Serdar Egeli, Asst. Prof. Mustafa Özcan, Alumni Relations Coordinator; Prof. İzzet Gümüş, Director of the Graduate Education Institute, along with many academic staff members.

## A GATHERING STRENGTHENING THE ALUMNI–UNIVERSITY BOND

Accompanied by music and refreshments, the event offered graduates an enjoyable atmosphere where they refreshed their memories of university life and experienced IGU’s alumni-centered approach firsthand. The reunion, during which New Year wishes were shared, increased interaction among alumni while further strengthening their sense of belonging to the university.

## LIFELONG LEARNING AND ACADEMIC CONTINUITY OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALUMNI

In line with its holistic education vision that extends beyond graduation, Istanbul Gelisim University continues to support its alumni. Within this scope, each participant who attended the Alumni Reunion and was included on the registration list was granted the right to participate free of charge in one training program offered by the Continuing Education Application and Research Center, valid for one year. This initiative aims to help alumni adapt to the changing business world and continuously enhance their competencies.

In addition, as part of the event, four alumni were awarded free master’s degree opportunities and scholarships. Through this support, the university encourages its graduates to re-engage in knowledge production processes.

## STRONG ALUMNI NETWORK, STRONG FUTURE

Istanbul Gelisim University positions its alumni not merely as part of its past, but as strategic stakeholders in its institutional development and future. With comprehensive support mechanisms extending from education to career development and from academia to professional life, IGU continues to build a strong alumni network presenting a university model that grows, evolves, and creates value together with its graduates.

## IGU CONDUCTED “SPEED READING WITH COMPREHENSION” TRAININGS IN SIRNAK

The “Speed Reading with Comprehension Techniques Training” organized by Istanbul Gelisim University (IGU) was successfully completed with strong participation in the Silopi and Cizre districts of Şırnak. The trainings were held on December 22–23, 2025 at the Silopi Guidance and Research Center (RAM) Training Hall, and on December 24–25, 2025 at the Cizre RAM Training Hall. In addition to numerous participants, Silopi District Governor Çağlar Partal also attended the training held in Silopi.

### PARTICIPANTS ENHANCED SPEED, COMPREHENSION, AND TEACHING SKILLS

Throughout the program, participants engaged in hands-on activities focused on speed reading, increasing comprehension speed, and effectively using reading strategies. The trainings addressed techniques that enable participants to analyze texts in a shorter time and developed trainer competencies aimed at teaching these techniques to others. The comprehensive content ranging from eye exercises and concentration practices to text analysis applications and speed test assessments strengthened both individual performance and participants’ roles as educators.

### TRAININGS DELIVERED BY IGU REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE FERHAT SAHIN

The trainings were conducted by Ferhat Şahin, IGU Regional Representative and trainer. Şahin met with educators from different institutions and disciplines in both districts and carried out sample activities demonstrating how speed reading techniques can be applied in educational settings.

Organized in cooperation with Silopi RAM and Cizre RAM, the program aimed to contribute to the professional development of educators in the region. At the end of both trainings, participants were awarded Certified Trainer Training certificates.

## PROGRAM SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED

The four-day events were completed efficiently with active participation from attendees. The program strengthened Istanbul Gelisim University's support for regional educational initiatives and was considered an important step toward the wider dissemination of speed reading techniques.

## VISIT FROM THE CUBAN CONSULATE GENERAL TO ISTANBUL GELISIM UNIVERSITY

Rosa Amelia Frande Sanchez and Lisvan Aleaga Tamayo, officials from the Cuban Consulate General in Istanbul, paid a courtesy visit to Prof. Bahri Şahin, Rector of Istanbul Gelisim University, at his office. The meeting was also attended by IGU Vice Rectors Prof. Necmettin Maraşlı and Prof. Nuri Kuruoğlu.

During the visit, opportunities for academic and cultural exchange, as well as topics related to strengthening higher education relations between the two countries, were discussed. The meeting emphasized Istanbul Gelisim University's vision of internationalization and the importance it places on global academic collaborations.

## IGU CULINARY ARTS GRADUATE AND MASTERCHEF 2025 CHAMPION SEZER DIRICAN MEETS STUDENTS AT ISTANBUL GELISIM UNIVERSITY

Istanbul Gelisim University proudly welcomed Sezer Dirican, the MasterChef 2025 champion and a graduate of the Culinary Arts Program at Istanbul Gelisim Vocational School. During his visit, Dirican shared his experiences in the field of gastronomy with students and took part in a meaningful and unforgettable reunion with the IGU family that contributed to his championship journey.

## RECTOR PROF. BAHRI SAHIN PRESENTED A PLAQUE TO SEZER DIRICAN

As part of the visit, Istanbul Gelisim University Rector Prof. Bahri Şahin presented Sezer Dirican with a plaque in recognition of his achievements and contributions to the university.

The ceremony was attended by IGU Vice Rector Prof Nuri Kuruoğlu, Vice Rector Necmettin Maraşlı, IGU Secretary General Assoc. Prof. Serdar Egeli, Head of the Culinary Arts Program at Istanbul Gelisim Vocational School Lecturer Zeynep Kurhan, and Lecturer İbrahim Levent Demirçakmak from the Culinary Arts Department.

## THE CHAMPION'S SKILLS SHOWCASED AT THE IGU GASTRONOMY WORKSHOP

Following the visit, Sezer Dirican conducted a workshop in the B Block kitchen at IGU. During the event, students had the opportunity to learn the champion's culinary secrets and gain hands-on professional experience. Drawing on years spent in the kitchen, Dirican shared both fundamental and innovative culinary techniques with the participants. Students benefited from his experiences and received valuable insights into how to progress in the world of gastronomy.

## AN ENJOYABLE INTERVIEW WITH SEZER DIRICAN ON IGU TALKS

At the end of the events, an interview with Sezer Dirican was held as part of the IGU Talks program. Sharing the experiences he gained through the MasterChef competition, Dirican engaged in an enjoyable conversation about the future of the gastronomy sector. Speaking about his passion for cooking, the challenges he faced during the competition, and the most significant moments of his culinary career, Dirican delivered inspiring messages to young people, emphasizing that they should never lose their determination and passion on their journey to success.

## **IGU ACADEMIC PROF. ISMET CAVUSOGLU JOINS THE ARTIST ROSTER OF ESTOPIA ART GALLERY**

Prof. İsmet Çavuşoğlu, a faculty member at Istanbul Gelisim University (IGU), Faculty of Fine Arts, has been included in the artist roster of Estopia Art Gallery, one of the international art platforms. Çavuşoğlu's works have begun to meet international art circles and collectors through the gallery.

### **INVITATION CAME FROM THE GALLERY MANAGEMENT**

Sharing his evaluations regarding his artistic production process and the visual language he has developed, Prof. İsmet Çavuşoğlu stated that his works carry a dynamic structure progressing toward abstraction, and said:

“My paintings reflect a dynamic process that evolves toward abstraction by using various pictorial elements. At times, they possess a strong abstract quality that concretizes lyrical representational structures. I incorporate forms, colors, and textures into harmonious compositions that turn into a visual exuberance, awakening poetic feelings in the viewer. I approach this with a personal style; I embrace experimentation and the use of rich plastic languages. I use different styles simultaneously, blending spontaneity with carefully constructed arrangements that include mythological narratives and fantasies. I have developed a visual language that I believe best represents me in contemporary art, one that connects abstract and figurative expression and combines cultural memory with bold contemporary sensibility and technique. My practices include oil and acrylic painting, watercolor, mosaic, fresco, sgraffito, and printmaking.”

Referring to the collaboration process with Estopia Art Gallery, which is headquartered in Aosta and operates in Italy, Switzerland, and Romania, Çavuşoğlu noted that the invitation came from the gallery management. He described the process as follows:

“The idea of including me in their list of artists came from the gallery management. They stated that they had been following artists around the world for years, appreciated my works, and wanted to work with me, and they visited my studio in Istanbul. We reached an agreement, and as of July 2025, we began working together.”

## IGU'S INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATION IN THE FIELD OF ART IS STRENGTHENING

This international collaboration between Prof. İsmet Çavuşoğlu, a faculty member at Istanbul Gelisim University, Faculty of Fine Arts, and Estopia Art Gallery has contributed to the global visibility of the university's academic expertise in the fields of art and design. Bringing together academic production and artistic practice, this process stands out as one of the significant developments strengthening Istanbul Gelisim University's presence in the arts in line with its internationalization vision.

### **"THE SOUND OF ROOTS, THE RHYTHM OF THE FUTURE" EVENT HELD AT IGU**

Organized by the Turkic World Youth Council Club operating within Istanbul Gelisim University (IGU), the event titled "The Sound of Roots, the Rhythm of the Future" was held with the aim of bringing together the rich cultural and musical heritage of the Turkic World with contemporary art and technology. During the event, traditional musical motifs were blended with modern artistic approaches, offering university students an innovative and dynamic perspective.

## TRADITIONAL MOTIFS MEET MODERN MUSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Within the scope of the event, motifs from traditional Turkic music such as epic narratives and kopuz melodies were combined with a modern techno musical foundation. Through this approach, students were encouraged to rediscover sounds belonging to their cultural identity in a contemporary and dynamic format. The program aimed to create a bridge that supports intergenerational cultural transmission.

## EMPHASIS ON INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

With the "The Sound of Roots, the Rhythm of the Future" event, the promotion of artistic innovation and interdisciplinary studies within the university was also emphasized. Demonstrating how the past and the future can be brought together through music, the event highlighted the power of art as a strong medium of communication and expression.



## IGU'S INNOVATIVE AND CULTURAL VISION REFLECTED

Offering an artistic perspective rooted in tradition and oriented toward the future, the event provided a platform reflecting Istanbul Gelisim University's cultural richness and innovative spirit. "The Sound of Roots, the Rhythm of the Future" stood out as one of the significant examples of the university's efforts at the intersection of culture, art, and technology.