



2020 ACTIVITY REPORT

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Our Team



Michael Sheitelman, Chief Strategic Officer

As CSO, Mr. Sheitelman is responsible for defining the organization's vision and strategy, as well as the creative development of various projects and programs initiated by StrategEast and in cooperation with other organizations. Mr. Sheitelman's extensive and varied experience includes over 20 years of activity as a strategic consultant and senior manager in various international projects, including political campaigns, media management and social and environmental initiatives. Mr. Sheitelman has advised election campaigns in Israel, Russia, Latvia, Kyrgyzstan, as well as nongovernmental organizations. Michael studied physics, mathematics and aerodynamics at St. Petersburg's Polytechnic University and at Bar Ilan University in Israel.



Tetiana Voitovych, Project Manager

Ms. Voitovych is responsible for coordinating StrategEast's main projects and organizing the events of StrategEast. She began her career as Team Assistant at Business Sweden (the Swedish Trade and Invest Council by the Embassy of Sweden in Ukraine). Ms. Voitovych also served as a Team Assistant at the Ukrainian NGO EasyBusiness and as an Executive Assistant at the private equity fund Diligent Capital Partners, where she honed her skills in project coordination and event management. Tetiana graduated from Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (BA Law).



Lidia Shavlo, Chief Analyst

In this role, Ms. Shavlo is responsible for coordinating StrategEast's research projects, as well as prioritizing the center's information needs. Lidia's experience includes over a decade in communications and public relations in both the private and public sector. Before joining StrategEast, Ms. Shavlo worked at PRP PR agency, a Weber Shandwick affiliate company, implementing award-winning PR strategies for international clients, including Coca-Cola, MasterCard, Microsoft, USAID, and others. Ms. Shavlo has worked within a communications team at a Ukrainian tech start-up, Sayenko Kharenko law firm, the Investment and Trade Facilitation Center, for Ukrainian MP and a political party. Lidia studied English philology in Kyiv National Linguistic University (MA), and public governance and policy analysis at the Kyiv School of Economics.



Praskovja Bystrova, VP for Strategic Communications

Ms. Bystrova joined StrategEast as a project manager in 2017 after many years of social activism, leading several youth NGOs and working in project management and public relations at the Educational Human Rights House Chernihiv in Ukraine. After conducting research in the field of pro-sustainable strategies within her International Master's Program, she is currently working on the strategy development of StrategEast. Ms. Bystrova studied social science (BA) at the Crimean University of Humanities (Ukraine) and social science and applied science (MA) at the University Rovira i Virgili (Spain), the University of Bordeaux (France) and the University of Porto (Portugal).



This year has been marked by the global pandemic outbreak. But even amid these times we have managed to launch several projects that are extremely important for the region.

In November 2019, the inaugural StrategEast State and IT Eurasian Forum was held in Kyiv. This unique platform for the first time has gathered all the stakeholders who are interested in building a knowledge-driven economy in Eurasia, including government officials from the EU, U.S. and Eurasian countries, and representatives from the global and local IT industry, international financial institutions, think tanks, and civil society leaders.

In February 2020, the StrategEast EPAM IT HUB project was launched in Tbilisi. The educational center established by StrategEast jointly with the one of the global leading engineering companies—EPAM Systems, as well as Georgia’s Innovation and Technology Agency, and Tbilisi BTU University has been set up as a practical tool to create an IT ecosystem and is planned to be scaled for the whole Eurasian region. Already in September 2020, the first IT HUB graduates will complete their studies in one-to-one remote learning format and are going to receive their first job in a global IT company without leaving Georgia.

The pandemic has certainly adjusted our plans. For example, this year our Young Leadership Program held together with

the Open World Leadership Center, specially tailored for the young deputy ministers of Eurasian countries, in Washington has been canceled. With that, all our activities devoted to the creation of the IT ecosystem in Eurasia were adjusted to the new circumstances and are continuing amid the lockdown.

Not being able to hold in-person meetings encouraged us to set up a StrategEast.Live—a series of online discussion panels with global thought leaders and decision makers. Within this format, we had an opportunity to discuss new legislative initiatives, digital transformation of public services, new opportunities to attract Western investments to the Eurasian IT industry, and much more.

Citing one of our speakers on the online panel on the digital transformation of Eurasia: “what was planned to be done in a year was done in a month, what was intended to be accomplished in a decade was accomplished in half a year.”

Due to the pandemic, we were able to speed up many processes. Obviously it is much easier to get high-ranking officials from different countries together on one Zoom conference rather than to any Eurasian capital. The best coaches working in one of the global IT leading companies have become available to students from Georgia thanks to the online training format.

The most exceptional thing about all of our activities is that they all are scalable. Today, 40 students from Tbilisi are

studying in our IT HUB. But thanks to the online learning format and one-to-one training, gifted youngsters from other cities of Georgia, as well as from other countries of Eurasia can join them—and in the nearest future we plan to open our IT HUB for students in Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan.

It is important to admit that at this stage, to expand IT HUB, we need support from international development agencies and international financial institutions who are interested in building up the digital economy in Eurasia. With that we expect this program will become self-sustaining in extremely short period.

Planned and executed as a scalable global program, the StrategEast IT HUB is adjustable for students from any country while the tuition language is English. By implementing this ambitious program in the Eurasian region we are involving a critical mass of local youngsters in a transparent, accountable economy and connecting them to the global digital economy.

StrategEast is proud to be one of the consistent driving forces transforming the economies of Eurasian countries from the natural-resource-based model to the knowledge-driven one.

**Sincerely,
Anatoly Motkin
President, StrategEast**

StrategEast Westernization Index 2020



In February of 2020, StrategEast released the Westernization Index 2020, which assesses the processes of adherence to Western values in post-Soviet countries outside of Russia across five dimensions—political, legal, economic, cultural, and lifestyle. The second edition of this Index, released two years after the first one, retains its unique features:

- it is the only report to analyze the 14 countries of the Post-Soviet, Non-Russian (PSNR) region as a whole;
- it measures each country's wholesale integration into the Western world across many sectors;
- it is prepared for the West by experts from the region.

The second edition shows trends in political, economic, and legal Westernization, and by extension, the effectiveness of efforts by Western institutions operating in the region.



**Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger,
Chairman of the Munich Security Conference**

"The 2020 Westernization Index documents that much has been achieved in the past 30 years: many post-Soviet countries have moved towards more democratic and market-oriented institutions. But the report also demonstrates that much remains to be done: from ensuring individual freedoms and independent courts to protecting human rights—the process of transition that started 30 years ago is far from completed."

Four megatrends of the region

Multi-speed Westernization has been taking place across the region at a variable pace. In most cases it is possible for the PSNR countries to "Westernize" and adopt the values and practices of liberal democracies. However, most of the countries in the region prefer to take as much Westernization as they can carry without damaging the power vertical.

Multilateralism refers to the tendency of countries, especially small ones, to ally with other countries, through membership in various organizations to defend their interests. The increasing expansion of the Russia-led project of the Eurasian Economic Union, which now covers Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Russia, is set to grow even more. Other countries such as Georgia, Ukraine and to some extent Moldova are willing to join the EU.

Multipolar influence. For years the only game in town was the Kremlin. Over the course of the post-Soviet period, the West created competition for Russia and diluted its

dominance. The penetration of the West has been widely slow and has occurred at different speeds—mainly taking place in the countries that have been willing to reform. After 30 years of a bipolar region, there is another player emerging with a great force. China has been quietly and without fanfare engaging efficiently with the governments in the region. The countries in China's geographic proximity were first to engage with Beijing in a series of projects of economic nature.

Mobility. There are few countries in the PSNR region that offer the possibilities of developed Western states. That is why there has been an intense outflow of migration and mobility in the region. As EU members, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania enjoy the visa-free regime and the EU labor market is open to these countries. The visa-free regime with the EU is also in place for Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine, which has significantly increased the amount of travel to the EU states.

STRATEG EAST WESTERNIZATION INDEX 2020 HAS BEEN PRESENTED BOTH IN THE EU AND THE UNITED STATES:

Presentation of the StrategEast Westernization Index 2020 at the Center for European Policy Studies (CEPS), Brussels (Belgium), February 24, 2020. The event gathered over 100 participants, including high-profile EU officials and academics.

Left to right: Anatoly Motkin, President, StrategEast

Steven Blockmans, Senior Research Fellow and Head of Foreign Policy and of Institutions Unit, CEPS

Khatuna Burkadze, Advisor on Strategic Communications and Researcher, Geocase



Presentation of the StrategEast Westernization Index 2020 at the Harriman Institute of Columbia University, New York City (NY, USA), February 25, 2020.

Left to right: Anatoly Motkin, President, StrategEast

Justin Burke, Adjunct Professor in International Affairs, Columbia University; Publisher and Executive Director, Eurasianet

StrategEast President Anatoly Motkin participated in the Munich Security Conference.





StrategEast Westernization Award

In February 2020, StrategEast announced its Westernization Award 2019 nominees. The Westernization Award was established for significant contribution of politicians, business representatives and civil activists in creating closer ties between Eurasian and Baltic countries and the Western world. It was presented in six categories: **Economic Westernization, Political Westernization, Legal Westernization, Westernization of Lifestyle, Language and Culture Westernization, and Lifetime Achievement.**

NOMINEES IN 2019 WERE:

Economic Westernization – Volodymyr Zelensky, President of Ukraine

Volodymyr Zelensky has been awarded the Economic Westernization Award for the establishment of the land market in Ukraine. In 2019, President Zelensky instructed the Verkhovna Rada (Ukrainian Parliament) to lift the moratorium on land sales and adopt a bill allowing the land market to open. The Ukrainian Parliament passed the bill. The World Bank estimates that by lifting the moratorium on farmland sales and introducing the open land market, Ukraine can boost its economy by up to 2%.

Political Westernization – Carl Bildt, Prime Minister of Sweden (1991–1994), Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden (2006–2014), and Radosław Sikorski, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland (2007–2014), Member of European Parliament

Carl Bildt and Radosław Sikorski have been awarded the Political Westernization Award for launching the Eastern Partnership initiative. Over the past decade the collective efforts of the EU and the Eastern neighbours—Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine have brought considerable benefits to the citizens including more trade, mobility, increased economic development, and a better quality of life.

Westernization of Lifestyle – Juan Navas-Sabater, Lead ICT Specialist, Program Leader in European Union Member States, Europe and Central Asia, World Bank

Mr. Juan Navas-Sabater has been

awarded the Lifestyle Westernization Award in recognition of his contribution to bringing fast broadband internet to millions of people in Central Asia with the World Bank Digital CASA Project.

Legal Westernization – David Neuberger, Baron Neuberger of Abbotsbury, Chair of the International Advisory Board, Ukraine’s High Court on Intellectual Property

Lord Neuberger has been awarded the Legal Westernization Award for his contribution to the development of legislation on intellectual property rights in Ukraine. The international advisory board of Ukraine’s High Court on Intellectual Property chaired by Lord Neuberger forms part of a radical transformation of the country’s legal system.

Language and Culture Westernization – Reed Hastings, Co-founder and CEO at Netflix

Mr. Hastings has been awarded the Cultural and Language Westernization Award for offering TV streaming service to post-Soviet countries, thus spreading the habit of using legal multimedia content across the region and motivating the citizens to learn English.

Lifetime Achievement – Madeleine Albright, U.S. Secretary of State (1997–2001)

Ms. Madeleine Albright has been awarded the Lifetime Achievement Westernization Award in recognition of her tremendous contribution to the integration of post-Soviet countries into the Western economic system.

NOMINEES IN 2018:



Political Westernization - Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger, Chairman of the Munich Security Conference



Economic Westernization - Shavkat Mirziyoyev, President of Uzbekistan. The Award was presented to Javlon Vakhobov, Ambassador of Uzbekistan to the U.S.



Legal Westernization - Viktor Prokopenya, technology entrepreneur and investor.



Language and Culture Westernization - Erden Kazhybek, Head of the Institute of Linguistics in Kazakhstan, one of the main developers of the Latin-Kazakh alphabet



Lifetime Achievement - Toomas Hendrik Ilves, President of Estonia (2006–2016)

StrategEast Westernization Index Media Coverage

StrategEast activities, including the presentation of the Westernization Index 2020, gained extensive media coverage. There were dozens of newspaper articles and online publications from different countries, including Georgia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Moldova, Latvia, and Ukraine.



Global Minds Initiative

StrategEast State and IT Eurasian Forum

On **November 4–5, 2019**, StrategEast held an inaugural State and IT Eurasian Forum in Kyiv that brought together global and local representatives of the private sector, governments, and international financial institutions.

This Forum became a unique platform to discuss what needs to be done to develop the knowledge-driven economy across the region and to assist the Eurasian countries to become integrated into the global economy.



StrategEast State and IT Eurasian Forum topics were:

- **The IT industry in Eurasia—different paths, common challenges?**
- **Data driven economy empowers Eurasia**
- **Building the new economy in Eurasia**
- **Legislative initiatives in the IT sphere**
- **Is the new economy a remedy for corruption?**
- **Electronic payment systems regulation**
- **IPR in the Eurasian region**
- **Tax regulation in the IT sector**
- **Central Asia as a digital HUB of Eurasia**
- **The IT industry in Ukraine**

StrategEast remains fully committed to developing a thriving IT industry in post-Soviet countries. Within the framework of its flagship Global Minds Initiative, StrategEast has launched a number of new studies and activities aimed at developing the tech industry in post-Soviet countries as a part of their economic transitions to become better integrated into the free world's economy.



From left to right: Matthew Murray, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Europe, the Middle East and Africa, U.S. | Juan Navas-Sabater, Lead ICT Specialist, Program Leader, World Bank | Rashad Azizov, Head of the Department of Innovative Development of Information Society and Electronic Governance, Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies of the Republic of Azerbaijan | Ana Chirita, Strategic Projects Director at the National Association of ICT Companies, Moldova | Oleg Kondrashov, CEO of EnCata, Belarus | Farid Safarov, Director General, Directorate for Digital Infrastructure on Transport at the Ministry of Infrastructure of Ukraine

Prasanna Lal Das, Lead Digital Strategist, World Bank

“When countries like Ukraine and its neighbors start thinking about digital economy, they need to start thinking about data first. The data is the foundation of digital economy. However, the foremost challenge that we see is the data poverty... Most policies start there—how do we actually get the data in one place and how do we form policies. But implementation is the key. Do not leave it at a policy and theoretical level itself.”

Dimitar Bogov, Regional Lead Economist for Eastern Europe and Caucasus, EBRD

“The key issue in Eurasian countries is how to create environments where success and variety of IT companies will be just a normal way of doing business.”

Oleksandr Boryakov, Deputy Minister of Digital Transformation of Ukraine

“The creation of a separate Ministry of Digital Transformation in Ukraine is the sign that we understand the importance of switching to 4.0 digital era... The task of the work of the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine is not only to make all public services online but also to make the interaction between government and citizens simple and transparent... We can't have digital government if Ukrainians don't know how to use it and are afraid of online interaction.”

Dmytro Sholomko, Director of Google Ukraine

“IT ecosystem in Ukraine lacks funding; there are many reasons for that—war, economic uncertainty, corruption. Still I think this gap is too big and it needs to be fixed... IT industry is a greenfield opportunity for Eurasian countries.”



From left to right: Horton Beebe-Center, President Emeritus of Eurasia Foundation | Martin Bailey, Head of Unit for Digital Policy Development and Coordination in DG CONNECT, European Commission | Dimitar Bogov, Regional Lead Economist for Eastern Europe and Caucasus, EBRD | Arkadiy Dobkin, Founder and President of EPAM | Dmytro Sholomko, Director of Google Ukraine



From left to right: Artem Nikiforov, Office for Reforms and Legislative Initiatives, Ukraine | Sarkhan Hashimov, General Manager for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Elcore AG | Edmunds Bejskis, Chairman of the Board, Latvia State Radio and Television Center | Andrey Biryukov, CEO, “Hi-Tech Office Ukraine” Public Association | Oleksiy Imas, Head of the EY Start-up Accelerator in Ukraine



IT HUB

In February 2020, the new educational center IT HUB Tbilisi was launched jointly by StrategEast and the leading American engineering company EPAM Systems in cooperation with Georgia's Innovation and Technology Agency and BTU University (Georgia).



Anatoly Motkin, President, StrategEast

Each IT HUB student has a personal instructor from EPAM Systems. The online training format in the IT HUB allows the educational center to work even during lockdown. Georgian students can not only acquire one of the IT specialties remotely, but also find their first job without leaving home.



Irakli Nadareishvili, Deputy Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia

The IT HUB training program is conducted according to the highest and most modern world standards by the EPAM teachers, providing graduates with the opportunity to receive highly paid work in the IT field upon graduation.



Givi Sartania, CEO, Wandio LLC

The main goal of IT HUB Tbilisi is to increase the number of qualified personnel in the IT field, create high-paying jobs, expand the capabilities of technological entrepreneurship, attract foreign direct investment, and export IT services.

The training center includes five professions: front-end developer, ASP.NET developer, JAVA developer, Android app developer, and QA engineer. During the first year of operation, IT HUB Tbilisi plan to graduate over 100 high-level programmers.



Mariam Lashkhi, Deputy Chairperson at Georgia's Innovation and Technology Agency (GITA)

Global Minds Initiative Advisory Board

StrategEast Global Minds Initiative Advisory Board is strengthened by one more experienced and prominent IT practitioner—Giorgi Alexidze, Chief Information Officer of Axios Holding, a fintech incubator. Board members will continue to contribute their professional expertise in the IT area and assist StrategEast in implementing the program in the Eurasian and Baltic region.



Giorgi Alexidze

Chief Information Officer
of Axios Holding

With his degree in computer software engineering from Georgian Technical University and over a decade's experience as a CTO and CIO in technology companies, Mr. Alexidze brings an in-depth perspective on the way technology impacts the world today. By applying his technical and managerial experience in the workplace, Mr. Alexidze has been instrumental in developing SaaS products with a global reach. Mr. Alexidze's vast experience and talent will help enhance the transformative effects of technology throughout post-Soviet countries outside of Russia.



Arkadiy Dobkin

President of EPAM
Systems

Mr. Dobkin is the principal founder, CEO and President of EPAM Systems. Under his direction, EPAM has grown to become one of the leading software and product engineering services companies in the world. For the past 20 years, Mr. Dobkin has been increasingly recognized as an instrumental force in opening the vast software talent pool of the former Soviet Union and Central and Eastern Europe to the international business community. In 2015, Mr. Dobkin was inducted into the Ernst & Young World Entrepreneur of the Year Academy and to the Elite Entrepreneur of the Year Hall of Fame. Mr. Dobkin holds an MS in electrical engineering from the Belarusian National Technical University.



Dr. Gregory Asmolov

King's College London

Gregory Asmolov is a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at King's College London. His current research project explores how digital platforms change the everyday lives of users who are remote from a zone of conflict, and how information technologies contribute to the participation of their users in warfare. Additionally, his research interests include disinformation and social polarization, and the role of digital networks in the emergence of alternative sociopolitical spaces.

He holds a BA in communication and international affairs from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, an MA in global communication from George Washington University, and PhD in media and communications from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE).



Talmon Marco

Co-founder of Viber
and Juno

Talmon Marco is the founder of Viber, a proprietary cross-platform instant messaging VoIP application for smartphones with over 400 million users, and Juno, a ride-sharing service.

In 1995, Mr. Marco co-founded Nortex Software, a developer of Civil Engineering software. In 1997, he co-founded Expand Networks, a privately held, venture back, the world leader in Application Traffic Management. Mr. Marco served as the President of Expand Networks until 2004.

Reports



Innovative Ukraine

On September 26, 2019, StrategEast President Anatoly Motkin presented the report “Innovative Ukraine,” prepared jointly with the managing director at UNIT.City Dmytro Yeromin, for the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations and Science and Technology committees staff in Washington D.C.

The report “Innovative Ukraine” was released jointly by StrategEast and the largest Ukrainian IT cluster UNIT.City. Based on an in-depth understanding of the Ukrainian IT industry and its growth restraints, the UNIT.City experts, together with the extensive international experience of StrategEast, propose ways to integrate the Ukrainian IT industry into the global ecosystem and suggests an action plan that Western policymakers, financial institutions, and global IT companies can follow.



Changing Economy—Changing Society. IT Industry in Eurasian Countries

In March 2020, StrategEast released the second edition of the Changing Economy, Changing Society report, which studies the trends and prospects for the development of the IT industry in the region, as well as the degree of influence of this industry on the transformation of Eurasian and Baltic society into a modern society of the Western type.

In this report, the author analyzed the level of development of the IT industry in the 14 countries of Eurasia and the Baltics, including: the level of legislative development; the state’s establishment of favorable conditions; the creation of specialized high-tech parks; and the share of IT in gross national product, particularly in the exports from these countries. In this study, Anatoly Motkin has outlined recommendations to policymakers on how to enhance the development of IT sectors in the region.



Civil Society’s Response to COVID-19 in Eurasia

Civil Society’s Response to COVID-19 in Eurasia was commissioned to examine the response of civil society actors to the needs of vulnerable populations during the COVID-19 outbreak in 11 Eurasian countries.

The purpose of Civil Society’s Response to COVID-19 in Eurasia is to study trends of civil engagement in addressing social and human rights challenges related to the novel pandemic in the countries of the region, as well as the role of civil society in transforming the region into a more transparent, modern, and Western-type one.

StrategEast Young Leadership Program

Every year StrategEast, together with the Open World Leadership Center, holds the Young Leadership Program. However, in 2020 due to the pandemic outbreak, the program has been canceled.

As a part of the program, the participants—deputy ministers and state secretaries from countries, which proclaimed or restored their independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union, visit the United States to deepen their exposure to the rule of law, a knowledge-driven economy, and tech development.

The program takes place over a week-long visit to the United States, and includes training events led by high-level U.S. officials and representative from the analytical community that are aimed at providing deeper insight into the interaction between state and business.

The main goal of the program is to help the participants to gain new tools and to broaden their networks for the development of economic relations between their countries and the U.S.

In 2019, during the program the deputy ministers met government officials, and representatives of civil society and the private sector. The participants were also divided into two groups and spent several days in home stays—in Philadelphia, PA, and Richmond, VA. The purpose of this part of the program is to familiarize participants with the system of interaction between local and federal authorities.



Washington, D.C. welcomed the participants of StrategEast Young Leadership Program 2019.

From left to right: Tetiana Voitovych (Project Manager, StrategEast); Murod Saidzoda (Head of Department of European and American Countries, MFA Tajikistan); Edmunds Bejskis (Deputy State Secretary, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, Latvia); Carolina Perebinos (State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, Moldova); Anatoly Motkin (Founder and President, StrategEast); Timur Toktabayev (Deputy Minister of Investment and Development, Kazakhstan); Farizshokh Usmanov (Deputy Chairman of Trade and Industry Chamber of Uzbekistan); Lasha Khutsishvili (Deputy Minister of Finance of Georgia); Daniyar Imanaliev (Head of Strategic Development, Economics and Finance of the Administration of President, Kyrgyzstan).



The first day of the StrategEast Young Leadership Program 2019 started with a meeting with Georgetown University professor of federalism Sam Potolicchio. Professor Potolicchio outlined the peculiarities of the U.S. federal system and its founding documents. *From left to right:* Daniar Imanaliev (Kyrgyzstan), Farizshokh Usmanov (Uzbekistan), Lasha Khutsishvili (Georgia); Edmunds Bejskis (Latvia); Sam Potolicchio (Georgetown University); Carolina Perebinos (Moldova); Anatoly Motkin (Founder and President, StrategEast); Timur Toktabayev (Kazakhstan); Murod Saidzoda (Tajikistan).

From left to right: Mr. Farizshokh Usmanov, Deputy Chairman Trade and Industry Chamber of Uzbekistan, Mr. Murod Saidzoda, Head of Department of European and American countries of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan and Mr. Edmunds Bejskis, Deputy State Secretary at the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of Latvia.



Meeting at the U.S. Department of State with DAS George Kent and Cheryl L. Fernandes to discuss U.S. foreign policy for the region. Mr. Kent serves as Deputy Assistant Secretary in the European and Eurasian Bureau at the U.S. Department of State, overseeing policy towards Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. Ms Fernandes is the Office Director for Caucasus Affairs and Regional Conflicts in the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs.

Meeting with Tara Blake, Director, International Project Finance at the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation. Ms. Blake is responsible for the key liaison for the agency with investors, U.S. government officials, foreign government officials, multilaterals, and other financial institutions. *From left to right:* Murod Saidzoda (Tajikistan); Tetiana Voitovych (StrategEast); Edmunds Bejskis (Latvia); Lasha Khutsishvili (Georgia); Timur Toktabayev (Kazakhstan); Anatoly Motkin (StrategEast); Tara Blake (DFC); Carolina Perebinos (Moldova); Daniar Imanaliev (Kyrgyzstan); Farizshokh Usmanov (Uzbekistan).



Meeting at Metropolitan Club with StrategEast Advisory Board member and International Tax and Investment Center (ITIC) president Daniel Witt and ITIC Vice President Blake Marshall. *From left to right:* Edmunds Bejskis, Daniar Imanaliev, Lasha Khutsishvili, Anatoly Motkin, Timur Toktabayev, Carolina Perebinos, Daniel Witt, Farizshokh Usmanov, Tetiana Voitovych, Blake Marshall, Murod Saidzoda.



The nine participants of the StrategEast Young Leadership Program in 2018 were English-speaking deputy ministers under the age of 40 representing their home governments of Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Moldova, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

A crucial part of the program was exchanging and learning new information about reform and state management not only between the host and the participating parties but also between the deputy ministers

StrategEast Young Leadership Program 2018 delegation at the Thomas Jefferson Building, Library of Congress, in Washington, D.C.

From left to right: First Deputy Minister of Information Technologies and Communications of Uzbekistan Olimjon Umarov, State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova Tatiana Molcean, Deputy Minister of Energy of the Republic of Belarus Vadim Zakrevsky, Georgetown professor of federalism Sam Potolicchio, Founder and President of StrategEast Anatoly Motkin, Vice Minister of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania Martynas Norbutas, Deputy Minister of Energy and Coal Industry on European Integration of Ukraine Nataliya Boyko, Head of International Relations at the President’s office of the Republic of Tajikistan Manuchebr Hokimzoda, Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia Nino Tandilashvili, and Deputy Minister of Culture, Information and Tourism of Kyrgyzstan Azamat Zhamankulov.



#SYLP2018 delegation at the opening roundtable with Ambassador John O’Keefe, Counselor to the Board of Trustees of the Open World Leadership Center at the Whittall Pavilion of the Thomas Jefferson Building at the Library of Congress, in Washington, D.C.



Congressman Joe Barton (R-TX) and President of the U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress, former Congressman Cliff Stearns taking a group photo after a lively discussion with the StrategEast Young Leadership Program 2018 delegation.



Vice Minister of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania Martynas Norbutas and State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova Tatiana Molcean on their way to one of their engaging Hill meetings where they learned about the ins-and-outs of the U.S. government.



Congresswoman Lois Frankel (D-FL) taking a group photo with the StrategEast Young Leadership Program 2018 delegates in her office at the U.S. Capitol.

:LIVE StrategEast

Online discussions with global thought leaders

To keep discussing how technology can lead to an overall transformation in Eurasia amid the pandemic, StrategEast launched a series of online panels, StrategEast Live.



TECHNOLOGY AS A REMEDY

Panel speakers: Dr. Gregory Asmolov, King's College London; Dr. Tomicah Tillemann, Digital Impact and Governance Initiative Director at New America; Omri Segev Moyal, CEO at cybersecurity company Profero; Heiko Sundermann, EPAM VP, Head of Digital Engagement Practice; Mariam Lashkhi, Deputy Chairperson Georgia's Innovation and Technology Agency.



DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN EURASIA

Panel speakers: Anatoly Motkin, President, StrategEast; Natalija Gelvanovska-Garcia, Senior ICT Policy Specialist, World Bank; Oleksandr Bornyakov, Deputy Minister of Digital Transformation of Ukraine; Toomas Hendrik Ilves, President of Estonia (2006–2016), Stanford University



HOW THE COVID-19 CRISIS IS RESHAPING THE GLOBAL ECONOMY AND LABOR MARKET

Panel speakers: Anatoly Motkin, President, StrategEast; Torbjörn Becker, Director of Stockholm Institute of Transition Economics; Margot Ellis, Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator, USAID; Artur Radziwill, Director for Country Economics and Policy, EBRD.



EU PROGRAMS TO COMBAT THE PANDEMIC IN EASTERN PARTNERSHIP COUNTRIES

Panel speakers: Anatoly Motkin, President, StrategEast; Stefan Schleuning, Head of Cooperation at the Delegation of the European Union to Ukraine; Genadi Arveladze, Deputy Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia; Natela Turnava, Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia; Jeroen Willems, Deputy Head of Unit, European Commission, Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR).



ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING DIGITAL INITIATIVES IN EURASIA

Panel speakers: Natia Gvazava, Legal Counsel of Raizomat LLC; Samar Pratt, Managing Director in Exiger’s London office, a leader in the firm’s financial crime compliance advisory practice; Olesya Danylchenko, Deputy Director, Head of Payment Instruments and Credits Security Forum in Ukrainian Interbank Payment Systems Members Association EMA, Member of Advisory Group on Financial Services of European Cyber Crime Center (EC3) Europol; Matthew Murray, former Deputy Assistant Secretary at U.S. Department of Commerce



REMOTE EDUCATION IN THE WAKE OF THE PANDEMIC

Panel speakers: Irakli Kashibadze, CEO of GoandGrow, former head of the Georgian Innovation and Technology Agency; Vadim Zelenkov, EPAM Systems, Director, Training and Development; Horton Beebe-Center, President Emeritus of Eurasia Foundation; Nicola Doherty, Head of Higher Education EMEA & LATAM, LinkedIn.



DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF SMEs IN EURASIA

Panel speakers: Sebastian-A Molineus, World Bank, Regional Director for the South Caucasus, Europe and Central Asia; Ketevan Meparishvili, TWINO, Regional Manager of Asia; Ihar Kruhlik, EPAM Systems, SME digital development; Eric Hontz, CIPE, Deputy Regional Director for Europe and Eurasia.



FISCAL MEASURES TO FOSTER THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY IN EURASIA

Panel speakers: Daniel A. Witt, International Tax and Investment Center, President; Illya Sverdlov, DLA Piper Ukraine, Partner, Head of Tax Practice; Levan Dgebuadze, Revenue Service of the Ministry of Finance of Georgia, Head of Service Department; Dr. Susana Bokobo, Global Senior Tax Expert, Professor, Author and Creative Entrepreneur; Arsen Aldanov, State Revenue Committee of the Ministry of Finance of Kazakhstan, Expert of the Strategic Development Department.



OPEN DATA IN EURASIA DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Panel speakers: Anatoly Motkin, President, StrategEast; Pavel Koktysh, Deputy Chairman of the Board of Zerde National Infocommunication Holding; Dr. Juliet McMurren, specialist on open government, SecDev Group; Kateryna Onyiliogwu, Open Data Team Lead, USAID / UK Aid Transparency and Accountability in Public Administration and Services.



U.S. INVESTMENT IN THE EURASIAN NEW ECONOMY

Panel speakers: Arkadiy Dobkin, Founder, and CEO, EPAM Systems; Anatoly Motkin, President, StrategEast; Robert Strayer, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Cyber and International Communications and Information Policy, Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, U.S. Department of State; Lenna Koszarny, Founding Partner and Chief Executive Officer, Horizon Capital, Chair of the Board of Directors, American Chamber of Commerce (ACC) in Ukraine; Avtandil Kasradze, Chairman, Georgia's Innovation and Technology Agency.



FINTECH INDUSTRY IN EURASIA

Panel speakers: Asel Botpayeva, consultant on fintech industry in Kyrgyz Republic; Anatoly Motkin, President, StrategEast; Otar Gorgodze, Head of Fintech & Suptech Development, National Bank of Georgia; Inese Lazdovska, General Counsel, Mintos; Natan Avidan, Founder and CEO, Kernolab, Advisor, BigWallet.



EURASIA IN EUROPEAN AI ECOSYSTEM

Panel speakers: Anatoly Motkin, President, StrategEast; Oles Petriv, CTO, Reface.AI.; Nino Enukidze, Rector, Business and Technology University, Georgia; Gary Fowler, CEO, President and Co-founder, GSD Venture Studios.



GOVTECH INDUSTRY IN EURASIA

Panel speakers: Anatoly Motkin, President, StrategEast; Baizhan Kanafin, CEO, Documentolog, Leader, govtech working group for Digital Kazakhstan State Program; Edmunds Bejskis, Chairman of the Board, Latvia State Radio and Television Centre; Rashad Azizov, Head of Innovations and Digital Development Department, Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies of Azerbaijan.



GREEN ENERGY IN EASTERN PARTNERSHIP COUNTRIES

Panel speakers: Oleksandra Gumeniuk, Director, European Ukrainian Energy Agency; Olga Khakova, Associate Director for European Energy Security, Atlantic Council; Victor Parlicov, National Expert, Covenant of Mayors East in Moldova; Nino Tandilashvili, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia.

StrategEast Briefs

On September 26, 2019, StrategEast President Anatoly Motkin held a briefing for the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations and Science and Technology committees staff on the role of the IT industry in transforming the economy in Eurasian countries from a natural-resource-oriented model to a knowledge-driven economy. Special stress has been put on the importance of private property protection in those countries and the measures that should be undertaken to encourage the local governments to protect intellectual property rights.



On October 10, 2019, StrategEast President Anatoly Motkin held a discussion with the Centre of Eastern Studies in Warsaw (OSW) on digital transformation in Eurasian countries with special emphasis on Ukraine and Belarus.

The presentation focused on how the IT sector is fostering economic growth in the region and being a real game changer, not only bringing new skills and foreign direct investments, but also laying a solid foundation for civil society in those countries.

On November 14, StrategEast President Anatoly Motkin held a series of meetings with European Commission officials in Brussels. The discussions were focused on collaboration between StrategEast and European institutions on developing the digital economy in Eastern Partnership countries, based on the rule of law and private property protection.



In the Media

StrategEast continues to report on its program ideas through Op-Eds and interviews in various media outlets. In his Op-Ed for the Financial Times in September 2019, Anatoly Motkin shared his view on the importance of IPR protection in post-Soviet countries: "Rather than limiting our efforts to protecting the interests of western companies in the region, we should convey a simple message to the post-Soviet states: protecting intellectual property is of great economic interest to you and your citizens, and is the only way to ensure the integration of your economies into the new, global knowledge economy. It will help these states to reduce their reliance on resources and to start generating added value in their territories."

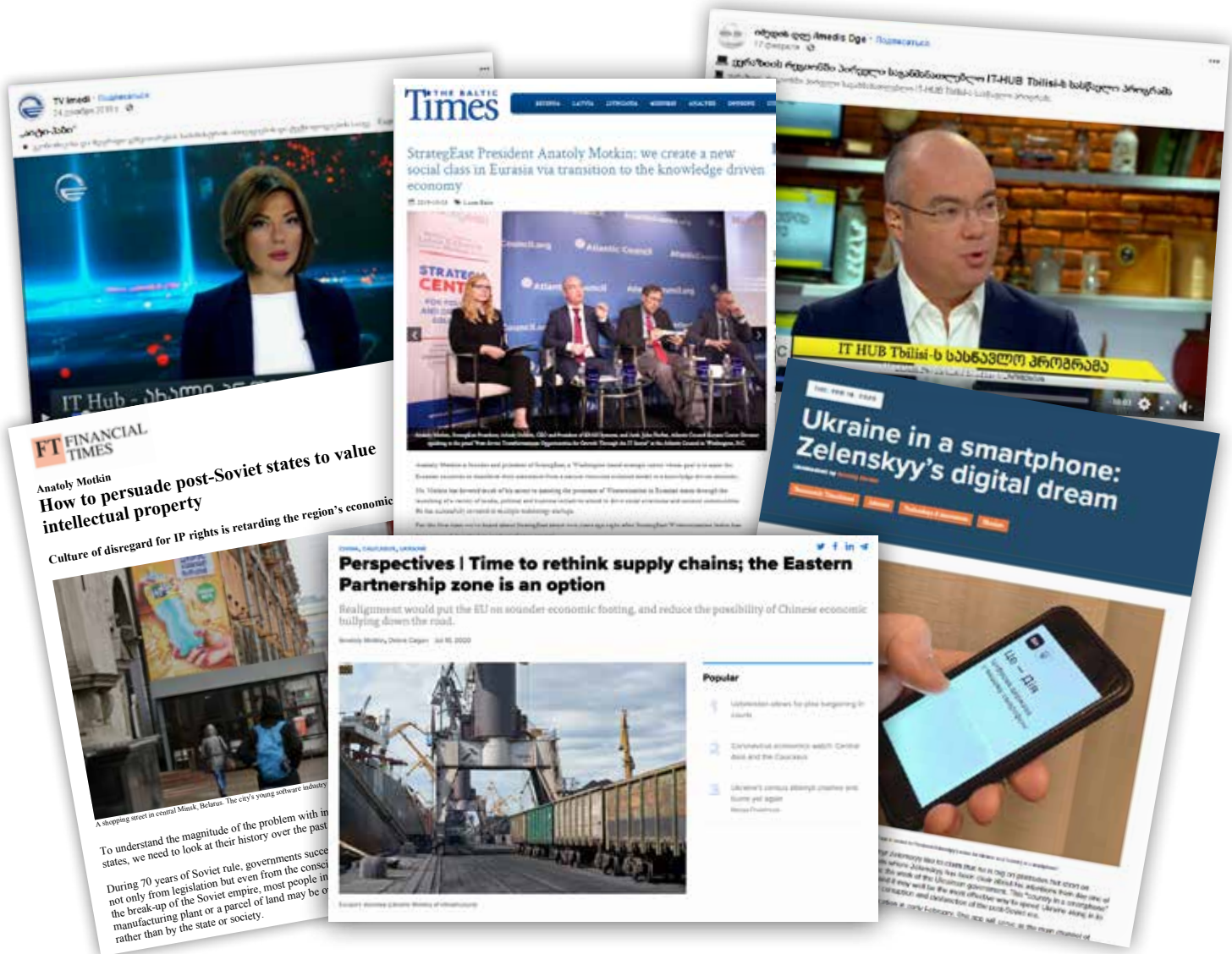
In October 2019, Anatoly Motkin revealed in his interview to the Baltic Times StrategEast's key activity directions and global mission. "StrategEast's key mission is to promote transformation of economy in the countries which restored or declared independence after the breakup of the Soviet Union (excluding Russia) from a traditional, resource-oriented model to the knowledge-driven economy. This transformation, based on the aforementioned values, would allow to better integrate the economy of this region into global economic system, inevitably increasing capitalization of each of these countries by several orders of magnitude,"—underlined Anatoly.

In February 2020, Anatoly Motkin shared his opinion with the Atlantic Council about Ukrainian President Zelensky's

intentions to digitize the work of the Ukrainian government: "The 'country in a smartphone' concept is now starting to take shape, and it may well be the most effective way to speed Ukraine along in its ambitious transformation away from the corruption and dysfunction of the post-Soviet era."

In an interview on Georgian IMEDI TV in February 2020, Anatoly Motkin spoke about the uniqueness of the StrategEast and EPAM IT HUB in Tbilisi. The students will not only be trained by international IT tutors who are high level practicing engineers, but will also get a highly paid job in international IT companies without leaving Georgia once they graduate.

In July 2020, Anatoly Motkin and StrategEast Advisory Board Member, former U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Debra Cagan discussed in an article for Eurasianet the unique and timely opportunity for Western companies to relocate their production from China to Eastern Partnership countries.



Advisory Board

StrategEast has expanded its Advisory Board, which provides strategic advice and guidance to the Center. We are happy to announce that Ambassador Clifford Bond has joined the Board.

MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY BOARD ARE:



Horton Beebe-Center

President Emeritus
of Eurasia Foundation

Heading the Eurasia Foundation, Mr. Beebe-Center made a great contribution to the development of small and medium-sized businesses in post-Soviet countries. The implementation of good governance and involvement of civil society in political life are always at the center of his attention. Fluent in Russian, Mr. Beebe-Center holds a BA in Soviet studies from Brown University and an MA in Russian studies from Harvard University.



Amb. Clifford G. Bond

Former Official at the U.S.
Department of State

Clifford G. Bond is a retired Foreign Service Officer who served as U.S. Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2001–2004 and as Special Envoy for Srebrenica in 2007–2008.

Ambassador Bond recently served as the Acting Coordinator for U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia from November 2016 to April 2017.

Prior to that, Ambassador Bond served as the Coordinator for Assistance to Ukraine at the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv. In his Department of State career he had a variety of political, economic, and commercial assignments in Washington and at the U.S. Mission to the EU in Brussels and U.S. Embassies in Belgrade, Stockholm, Prague, and Moscow.

From 2004–2006 he was a member of the faculty of the National Defense University conducting seminars on national security studies. He has also served as the Special Advisor to Congress's Commission for Security and Cooperation in Europe, also known as the Helsinki Commission.

Since retirement until the end of 2011, he was associated with the American University in Bosnia and Herzegovina as its Vice President. He received his undergraduate degree from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and a graduate degree from the London School of Economics.



On **August 3, 2020**, StrategEast held an annual Advisory Board meeting via Zoom attended by Horton Beebe-Center, Ambassador Clifford Bond, Debra Cagan, Michael Haltzel, and Daniel Witt. StrategEast President Anatoly Motkin walked the Advisory Board members through StrategEast's activities executed throughout the last year, introduced their results, and next steps.

Also, the plans for the future period amid the pandemic were one of the main topics on the meeting's agenda. The participants outlined comprehensive and ambitious plans for the subsequent period.



Debra Cagan

Former Official at the U.S. Department of State and Department of Defense

Debra L. Cagan worked as a career diplomat at the Department of State and as an official at the Department of Defense from the Reagan to Trump administrations, including serving as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Coalition, Peacekeeping, Humanitarian and Disaster Relief; Senior Director for European, Russian and Eurasian security issues; Special Advisor for Strategic and Nuclear Policy for Europe; Senior Advisor to U.S. and NATO military officials. Ms. Cagan led negotiations for the Highly Enriched Uranium Agreement with Russia and headed coalition operations for Iraq and Afghanistan.

Ms. Cagan, a native Chicagoan, has a BA and MA from the University of Iowa and completed additional postgraduate work at the University of Chicago towards her doctorate, where she was named the first woman fellow for the prestigious Armed Forces and Society Consortium.



Michael Haltzel

Senior fellow, Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies

Mr. Haltzel has made a great contribution to the establishment of peace and security in the region of Eastern Europe after the fall of the communist regimes. He is a recipient of state decorations from many Eastern European states, has served as OSCE monitor for the first postwar elections in Bosnia, and is the author or editor of ten books on European history and international relations. Mr. Haltzel holds a PhD in history from Harvard University.



David Tkeshelashvili

Head of Administration (Chief of Staff) to the President of Georgia (2010-2013)

Mr. Tkeshelashvili instituted a series of structural and policy reforms for decentralization and sustainable regional development in Georgia.

Mr. Tkeshelashvili led regional development and the local self-government reform process, first as a State Minister for Regional Issues, later under his leadership a new office, Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure was created. He served as a minister of the newly established agency till 2010.

He holds an MA in legal studies from Tbilisi State University and an LLM degree from Emory University in Atlanta.



Daniel A. Witt

President, International Tax and Investment Center

Working on the drafts of tax codes of many countries of the former USSR, Mr. Witt always followed the principles of good practices. Thanks to the contribution of Mr. Witt, the economies of these countries have gained a new chance for sustainable development and confidence in the world. Mr. Witt received a BBA (magna cum laude) in public administration and an MBA in finance from Western Michigan University.

Newsletters



StrategEast continues to send monthly newsletters to inform all our partners about our most significant developments.

StrategEast Eastern Partnership Bulletin



On June 2020, StrategEast presented a new product—a Bulletin on the main issues on the bilateral agenda of the EU and the Eastern Partnership countries.

The Bulletin is designed as a useful tool for the institutions and decision makers whose sphere of interest includes the EaP region.

Studying the processes of Westernization in Eurasian nations, StrategEast believes that further European integration of the Eastern Partnership countries will deepen their exposure to the rule of law, transparency, accountability, and will facilitate building a knowledge-driven economy, making the EaP region a better place to live.

StrategEast interviews leading experts from Eastern Partner countries on top priorities of cooperation with the EU.

Our plans for the near future

2nd StrategEast State and IT Eurasian Forum in Georgia

The next **StrategEast State and IT Eurasian Forum** will be held in Tbilisi, Georgia on September 15–16.

Considering the restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event is going to be held in both in-person and online formats in case of travel limitations in some countries.

The StrategEast State and IT Eurasian Forum will provide a unique platform for dialogue between governments and local and global IT industry leaders.

About 40 speakers and more than 150 guests are expected to take part in the forum.

The Project's Goals:

- To identify common opportunities and challenges of the IT sectors in the Eurasian and Baltic countries
- To propose practical solutions to existing challenges in the fields of legislation, taxation, and intellectual property rights (IPR)
- To attract international IT companies and venture capital funds to the opportunities in the IT industry in the region
- To share best practices, experience, and knowledge

Our plans for the near future

Expansion of IT HUB in Tbilisi and opening of IT HUB in other countries of Eurasia

This September, the first IT HUB graduates in Tbilisi will complete their studies and get their first job in a new specialty.

We plan to expand the capacity of IT HUB in Tbilisi to 100 people (currently there are about 30 students).

We are planning to open IT HUB in other cities of Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Kyrgyzstan.

The Project's Goals

- To create new jobs and attract FDIs in the region
- To provide young educated youth with the opportunity to find high-paid jobs and prevent them from leaving the country
- To strengthen the region's economy while creating a new high-income population segment
- To promote non-IT job opportunities: the penetration of the IT industry into the area will have the "side effect" of creating jobs in related sectors

About StrategEast

StrategEast is a strategic center with the mission to reinforce the values of the rule of law and private property protection in Eurasian and Baltic countries through the transition from natural-resource-based to knowledge-driven economy.

Our work is focused on the 14 countries that proclaimed or restored their independence after the collapse of the USSR: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

StrategEast is a registered 501(c)3 organization based in the United States.

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