

SalamAlum

OSCE ACADEMY
in Bishkek

OSCE Academy Alumni Magazine

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– Kushtarbek Shamshidov '10
(pg. 10)*

Contents

Welcome	3
OSCE Academy Updates	4
New Professional Opportunities	4
New Deputy Director	4
Junior Public Officers 2016-2017	5
Alumni Network in Numbers	5
Welcome New Deputy Director	6
Third Alumni Reunion	8
A Success Story: Kushtarbek Shamshidov 2010	10
Improving Research Skills among Local Post-graduate Students	13
Learning, Teaching and Transforming in Geneva	15
One-Year Stay at NUPI	16
Up and Up:	19
On the Way to PhD with The Bielefeld Graduate School in History and Sociology	19
Dealing with the Past for a Better Future. Shoah in Ukraine: Interviewing the Survivors	21
“A Year of Community Service”	24
Alumni Hobbies	24
Welcoming New Alumni	26
MA in Politics and Security Programme 2015-2016	26
MA in Economic Governance and Development Programme 2015-2016	27



*Victoria Orazova,
Alumni Affairs Coordinator*

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the sixth issue of the OSCE Academy's in Bishkek alumni magazine SalamAlum

In 2016 a number of important events happened in the life of the Alumni Network and the OSCE Academy in general.

The OSCE Academy was pleased to welcome our new Deputy Director, Ms Indira Satarkulova. Ms Satarkulova joined the team in July and for better introduction we publish her bio and interview in this issue.

The largest Alumni Network event – the 3rd Alumni Reunion was held in September and gathered more than 100 graduates from Central Asia, Afghanistan and other countries. This time alumni did not only participate, but also took active part in organizing the event. Earlier in the year, in May and June, alumni met in smaller groups in Dushanbe and Astana, for short professional meetings.

Two more Agreements were signed this summer to support the professional development of graduates. In June the OSCE Academy signed an Internship Agreement with the Investment Promotion Agency under the Ministry of Economy of the Kyrgyz Republic and in August a Memorandum of Understanding with the International Secretariat of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. Currently two alumni are undergoing the internships at the MFA in Kazakhstan under the Junior Public Officers' Programme: Vassiliy Lakhonin '13 and Yermek Abilgaziev '15.

Our partner institutions, the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) and the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP), continue a great tradition of providing our graduates with exclusive opportunities. Nurbek Bekmurzaev '14 and Gulaikhan Kubaeva '14 are completing their One-Year Fellows at NUPI and Rashid Gabdulkhakov '13 in spring successfully finished the MAS programme in Geneva. This year Regina Sokolova '14 has received the scholarship and started her studies at the GCSP.

Last but not least, in 2016 during the Alumni Reunion graduates raised 715 EUR for the Alumni Fund and purchased printer cartridges and several boxes of paper for current students. The Academy appreciates support of its alumni and growing interest in giving back not only financially, but also intellectually, through conducting short-term trainings and lectures at their Alma Mater.

Our sincere gratitude goes to the OSCE, the OSCE participating states and especially to NUPI, Norway and Switzerland, which specifically fund the alumni activities of the OSCE Academy!



NEW DEPUTY DIRECTOR

On 25 July 2016 the OSCE Academy in Bishkek welcomed Ms Indira Satarkulova, who joined its team as Deputy Director. Ms Satarkulova holds an LL.M degree in comparative legal studies (NY, NY USA) and is a licensed member of

the Kyrgyzstan BAR Association with successful professional experience in Kyrgyzstan and abroad.

She has taught Business law at the Kyrgyz-Turkish “Ataturk-Ala-too” International University,

lectured at educational training programmes of the International Court of Arbitration under CTI of the KR, was an invited speaker at Golden Gate University in San Francisco, California, USA. (read more on pg. 6)

NEW PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

On 16 June 2016 the OSCE Academy in Bishkek and the Investment Promotion Agency under the Ministry of Economy of the Kyrgyz Republic signed an Agreement regarding Internships of the Academy’s Graduates. The Agreement signed within the “Junior Public Officers” Programme of the OSCE Academy

which intends to offer graduates of the MA Programme in “Economic Governance and Development” the opportunity to intern in the Investment Promotion Agency under the Ministry of Economy of the Kyrgyz Republic.

On 17 August 2016 the OSCE Academy in Bishkek and the Inter-

national Secretariat of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly signed a Memorandum of Understanding regarding internships of graduates. According to this Memorandum, one OSCE Academy graduate will be offered a position of Research Fellow at the International Secretariat in Copenhagen for a period of six months. The selection will be on competitive basis.

JUNIOR PUBLIC OFFICERS 2016-2017

The OSCE Academy continues to provide its graduates with opportunities for internships in the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of their respective countries. These are three months in length and part of the Junior Public Officers' Programme. This year finalists are:



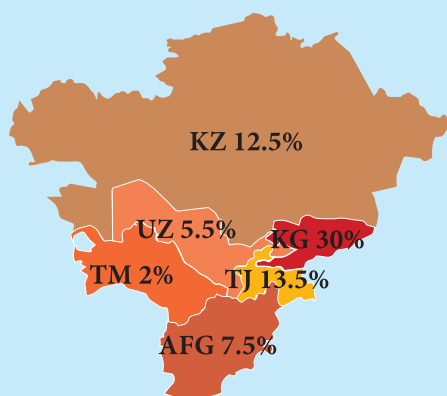
**BY 2016
TWENTY
ALUMNI HAVE
SUCCESSFULLY
COMPLETED
THE JPO
PROGRAMME**

Vassiliy Lakhonin '14 “My current experience at the MFA (at the Department of Multilateral Cooperation) is a dynamic combination of administrative-bureaucratic tasks along with intellectual challenges, ethics and diplomacy regulations, which speaks for the fact that learning is a complex and never-ending process.”

Yermek Abilgaziev '15 “With every week at the MFA I became more inspired to contribute to the development of my country and the strengthening of its political and economic role in the world. This internship offered me precisely this opportunity, by allowing me to employ my theoretical International Relations knowledge in a practical context. I gained valuable insight into MFA activities and am especially interested to know about the internal decision-making process. Last but not least, I am eager to learn more about how to achieve outcomes in the national interest, as I hope ultimately to build a career in the MFA.”

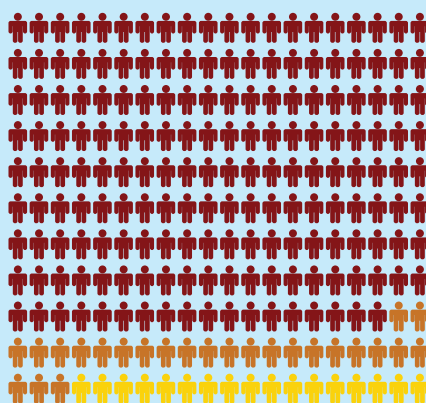
ALUMNI NETWORK IN NUMBERS

GEOGRAPHY



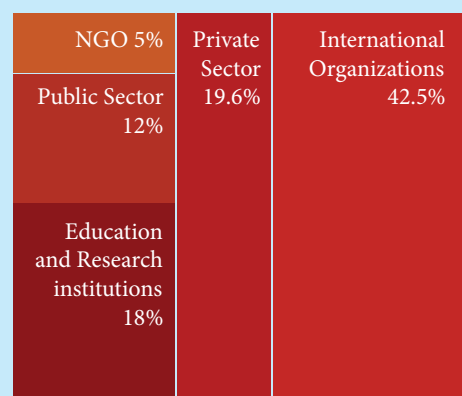
Out-of-Region 29%

EMPLOYMENT



- Employed only 72.5%
- Work and Study 10%
- Study only 7%

EMPLOYMENT BY SECTORS



The provided data illustrates the general statistics, which is based on the results of the Alumni Survey 2016 and contains the information on 296 alumni.

WELCOME NEW DEPUTY DIRECTOR

My new position allows supporting the whole educational process and witness discovery of new talents and experts whose intellectual development and success are partially based on my strong efforts

Ms Satarkulova, you have spent a few months with the OSCE Academy by now. Have your expectations been fulfilled? Have you faced any challenges or it is something you were ready for?

Every new job is challenging because you meet new people, face new tasks and goals and mainly, receive higher level of responsibility. My new position is alike but it is fascinating because the OSCE Academy is an unique and only educational institution of the OSCE in the world that provides with the great opportunity to obtain higher education under the supervision of distinguished foreign professors without any financial burden for the students and their families. My new position allows supporting the whole educational process and witness discovery of new talents and experts whose intellectual development and success are partially based on my strong efforts. I expect that my professional background will help the Academy to flourish further attracting more and more bright students from Central Asia, Afghanistan, Mongolia and other countries which are in need of enhanced intellectual potential.

You have a very rich experience

in the legal sphere. Does it help in your current position?

I personally believe that the legal background is a key to any successful professional standing because it helps to easily find any necessary information: law school helps to obtain great research skills; it strengthens oral, writing and diplomatic skills: these courses are core and mandatory in most law schools; it teaches you problem-solving abilities, helps to manage cooperating with different people and provide the best protection of the institution from the legal stand point. As a lawyer I also made lots of friends and professional connections, accumulated large informational and practical knowledge in the domestic and international legal areas, gained significant administrative experience which supports me to successfully manage my daily duties.

The OSCE Academy grants many opportunities to its students, alumni, training participants and etc. What opportunities have the Academy given you, as Deputy Director?

Unfortunately, before I did not know about the OSCE Academy and the studying opportunities



it offers. However, in the circle of life, “justice has triumphed” and now I am among those lucky people who are in the very heart of the Academy’s scientific network. It is my great pleasure to proudly represent the Academy in its numerous social and scientific events and at the same time further expand my personal intellectual development. The more we learn the more we understand that there are so many things we have been unaware of. During such opportunities I have a chance to meet many professionals and discuss or



dispute my subjects of interest. As you know, the truth is born in a dispute!

Administrative work takes a lot of time. But do you have any hobbies? How do you prefer to spend your spare time?

Administrative work does take lots of time but well organized schedule can allow living your own happy life. I try to spend free time with my family. Outdoor events and travelling are the most preferred and best ways to relax,

exercise, observe the nature and enjoy every single breath we take together on this beautiful planet. Horse riding is another favorite activity of mine. Having competitive element it is yet an enjoyable type of sport. It strengthens your muscles and health, teaches endurance and allows refreshing your mind.

What would you wish or advice to our alumni?

Dream about better personal and professional achievements and

pursue your dream. Don't wait somebody to come and help you because there is no other pleasure than to understand at some point of life that all you have achieved became possible mostly due to your own strong efforts, ability to tolerate and overcome all difficulties, desire to do the impossible. And when you reach the top, please do not lose your humanity, compassion and simplicity. Always remember that all great rivers and waterfalls start with one simple drop of water!



THIRD ALUMNI REUNION

On the 3rd and 4th of September 2016 the OSCE Academy hosted the third Alumni Reunion in Bishkek. Over hundred graduates from Central Asia, Afghanistan and other countries have participated in the event. This has been the largest alumni event of the Academy.

The Director of the OSCE Academy, Pal Dunay opened the conference and expressed his sincere gratitude to participants for their support and solidarity. He also thanked the OSCE Centre in Bishkek and the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) as they are playing very important role in developing the alumni community and also supporting alumni activities financially. "Through your qualities we are attracting people to teach and study at the OSCE Academy. You are our ambassadors." - Dr Dunay addressed the Academy's graduates during his welcome speech.

Ms Anna Nersesyants, the Acting Head of the OSCE Centre in

Bishkek, filled with substance the support of the Kyrgyz Republic and other OSCE participating states to the OSCE Academy. "Never stop learning because life never stops teaching" - concluded Ms Nersesyants and wished a productive and fruitful week-end.

Dr Indra Overland, representing NUPI one of the main donors of the event, hoped that the alumni community of the OSCE Academy will play a larger than ever role in Central Asia through mutual recognition, friendship and support of each other. "You are part of the elite because you have got excellent education, possibly the best in the region. You are in the elite because you have been working hard" - said Dr Overland to the graduates.

Deputy director, Ms Indira Satarkulova, former Academy director, Dr Maxim Ryabkov and former deputy director, Mr Shairbek Juraev gave presentations on fostering change in Central Asia and the role of intellectuals. The question was raised sharply

whether the training and education of the elite contributes to change in the region sufficiently. Do most who take these opportunities at the Academy and often elsewhere benefit from high quality training and scholarships leave the region or end up in a bubble isolated from the majority without much impact on socio-economic processes? Further, Ms Zamira Sydykova, former ambassador of Kyrgyzstan in the U.S. and Canada, Mr Medet Tiulegenov from the American University in Central Asia and Mr Daniyar Amanaliev, the founder of Art Studio Ololo spoke about career development, networking, and achieving success.

During the second half of the first day, working sessions were held and participants had the opportunity to attend two of five seminars on various topics and one workshop on research collaboration. Sessions were led by graduates, who wanted to share their knowledge in the sphere of their expertise:



Opening of the 3rd Alumni Reunion



Alumni Networking



Alumni of 2014

“Never stop learning because life never stops teaching” - Anna Nersesyants, Acting Head of the OSCE Centre in Bishkek

Rashid Gabdulkhakov '13 led the seminar “*Strategic Foresight Tools*”

Kodir Kuliev '13 EGD led the seminar “*Anti-corruption: Can We Fight Corruption in Central Asia?*”

Madina Abubeker '14 led the seminar “*Human Rights in Kyrgyzstan: Prevention of Torture in Places of Deprivation and Restriction of Liberty*”

Elnura Omurkulova-Ozierska '11 led the seminar “*Migration and Development*”

Natalia Zakharchenko '12 and Malika Tukmadiyeva '12 led the workshop “*Building bridges, burning walls: PROs and CONs of research collaboration*”

Dr Maxim Ryabkov, former Director of the OSCE Academy, also supported the idea of small working sessions and led the seminar “*Fear and exclusion: is right-wing populism a current danger?*”

On the second day of the reunion the alumni visited the Ala Archa National Park and had team-building and network-building activities.



Retreat at the Ala Archa National Park

ALUMNI FUND

In 2016 the alumni renewed the tradition of collecting donations for the Alumni Fund and during the Alumni Reunion raised EUR 715. It was decided to use the funds for cartridges for student's printer and paper, so that students would not be limited in printing

certain number of pages. And another part of funds was used to renew the ping-pong rockets, which is by now a great tradition of the Alumni Network. The OSCE Academy is really grateful to its graduates for their support!



A SUCCESS STORY: KUSHTARBEK SHAMSHIDOV, 2010



Kushtarbek Shamshidov graduated the OSCE Academy in 2010. In 2012 he received a MAS European Scholarship for Central Asia to study in Geneva. Today Kushtarbek is one of the most successful graduates of the OSCE Academy, who is Third Secretary/Consul at the Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic in Kuala Lumpur.

Kushtar, at what age did you start realizing that you would like to serve in the government of your country?

In 2012. That year I received a European Scholarship for Central Asia that was offered exclusively to the OSCE Academy's graduates to study at the University of Geneva and the Geneva Centre

«Another challenge would be accountability before the people you serve and in international diplomacy you should always keep in mind that firstly you are representing your country and then yourself.»

Minister advised me to consider working in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs upon my return to Kyrgyzstan. Since then, I began to look seriously into working in diplomacy.

What role did the OSCE Academy play in your professional development?

The experience and knowledge gained at the OSCE Academy, determined my professional future. I remember, that I've never missed a single lecture on the subject "China - Central Asia", which was delivered by former Foreign Minister Dr Muratbek Imanaliev. Then, in 2010, in connection with his appointment as the Secretary-General of the SCO, the above-mentioned lecture was continued by Mr Erlan Abdyl- daev, current Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic and one of the leading Kyrgyz experts on China. The theoretical and practical knowledge gained from practicing experts on China - Central Asian relations helped me to understand current issues in our region more accurately.

At the end of the second semester under the personal supervision of Mr Erlan Abdyl- daev I worked on my master's thesis "The SCO and Central Asia." Fortunately, with the support of my supervisor Mr Erlan Abdyl- daev and Dr Maksim

Ryabkov, then Director of the OSCE Academy, and due to the topic of my thesis and knowledge of Chinese language, I was given the opportunity to undertake internship at the Secretariat of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Beijing.

My experience as an intern at the Secretariat of the SCO has become a major advantage in passing to the basis of the Master's programme on "European and international security," of the University of Geneva on the Scholarship Programme by the GCSP.

Education in the excellent academic atmosphere of the OSCE Academy, the experience gained during the internship in Beijing and studying at the University of Geneva and GCSP, altogether has played a fundamental role in choosing my profession.

What is the most challenging part of being a representative of the public sector?

The challenging part probably is that the results of your work in the public sector are not as obvious as in the private sector. Another challenge would be accountability before the people you serve and in international diplomacy you should always keep in mind that firstly you are representing your country and then yourself.

for Security Policy (GCSP). One day Mr Ruslan Kazakbayev, then the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic has visited the GCSP, where I was doing my research. As I was the only researcher from the Kyrgyz Republic, the head of the GCSP arranged a meeting between Minister R. Kazakbayev and me. After a pleasant conversation, the



Many young people say that being a public servant means, you have to be ready to work 24/7 and there is no time left for personal life. Do you agree with this statement?

I partially agree, but if you want to have a personal life, you will have it and you will find time for it despite your busy schedule. I do remember that when we studied at the OSCE Academy we had chance to take some short-term courses such as Time management and communications skills. For example, even though Time management was not a major subject, it contained many practical implications both for professional and daily life, which I use up to now.

Where do you see yourself in ten years?

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs offers me plenty of opportunities to further develop my skills and there are many professionals in Kyrgyz diplomacy I can really learn from. For the next coming years, I would like to use these opportunities to be the best at what I do in order to take on more

challenges and be useful for the country, where I belong.

What can you advice those who want/plan to work in the government?

From my own experience, I would offer three basic suggestions:

First, after graduation, it is always hard to make the right choice and you are always in doubt. In this situation, there is no need to rush and if time permits, take the opportunity to do internship before taking the final decision. Internship gives you the chance to see the real picture from inside.

Second, sometimes the most important is the financial part of the offer. As we all know, at the moment the Central Asian region in terms of the government employees' salary leaves a lot to be desired. Therefore, a newcomer should settle his financial problems before entering the public sector or be ready to face the challenges.

Third, many would agree that work should bring joy and satisfaction. Moreover, it is important to feel it

Working process

as early as possible. In my case, as I suggested above, it was essential to find out about it during my internship. After few weeks, I have realized that I am surrounded by patriotic, professional, intellectual and open-minded people, who gave me more energy and inspiration to continue my professional path.



Kushtarbek with his family



Group work during the training

IMPROVING RESEARCH SKILLS AMONG LOCAL POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS

The OSCE Academy appreciates and supports initiatives of its graduates to return to the Academy in the role of lector, trainer or speaker, when they become experts in certain fields. This year, Dr Nuria Kutnaeva, graduate of 2005, expressed an interest to conduct training on “Research Methods for graduate and post-graduate students of social sciences and humanities” for students from Bishkek universities. Supported by her colleague, Dr Aijarkyn Kojobekova, Nuria proposed a three-day intensive programme for twelve participants. The training generated great interest among potential applicants even from other countries. Started on 1 July 2016, the training gathered graduate and post-graduate students, who were in the process of writing their theses.

The training’s objective was to improve the quality of academic paper writing skills. During the training, participants became familiar with a variety of research methods, learnt how to formulate

hypotheses and to put research questions, how to work on content analysis and etc. Participants were selected from local universities, research institutions and other organizations. As a result, participants re-formulated their research questions and learnt how to apply the knowledge received to their research works.

Here Nuria shares about how she developed an idea and brought it to life: “After the graduation from the OSCE Academy I continued my education. I made my PhD degree and defended the dissertation. At the same time I participated in the programme “The Central Asia Research and Training Initiative”, where leading university professors taught us how to make research more efficient and scholarly “correct”. There I got acquainted with Aijarkyn Kojobekova, who turned out to be not only a very advanced scholar, but also a like-minded person. I always wanted to make such a training in Bishkek. However, it was the invitation from Elvira Kalmurzaeva, another

Academy alumna, which turned out to be a trigger for the next step in this direction. In her e-mail she asked if I could make a lecture on academic writing for a group of Master’s students at the Diplomatic Academy of the Kyrgyz Republic. I invited Aijarkyn and we conducted a couple of lectures. But of course this was not enough. Therefore we made a decision to make a full-fledged training, which would cover some of the most important questions, which usually arise in front of a PhD student. We wanted to share the knowledge that we obtained from the trainings abroad with other students, who were struggling with their research. With this idea I turned to Victoria Orazova, the OSCE Academy’s Alumni Affairs Coordinator. She was very enthusiastic about this initiative and made all practical arrangements. I am very grateful for the OSCE Academy for this opportunity of conducting the training. The group of students was very active, smart and creative. Hope that the knowledge that we shared will help them in their further studies.”

ALUMNI SUPERVISION

Alumni Mentorship is one of the ways our graduates support the Academy and students. Mentorship can be done in different ways one of which is advising on internship places or even supervising during the internship. This year, Ekaterina Klimenko, graduate of 2010, contributed a lot to finding an internship opportunity at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), one of the most renowned think tanks of the world, where she currently works as a Researcher. Lidiya Chikalova, student of the MA in Politics and Security Programme 2015-2016, was selected for this position and interned under the supervision of Ekaterina.



“An opportunity to intern with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) had a great influence on my research career. One of the leading think tanks in the world provides with great sources for research, an amazing pool of academics and researchers keep their fingers on the pulse of new developments in politics and security. I was interning with the Russia and Eurasia programme, where my responsibilities included structuring and analyzing the public speeches, interviews, and articles by high-level officials of the Russian Federation, collecting and structuring statistical data on the Black Sea region, assisting with collecting and analyzing relevant material for the SIPRI Arctic Futures Project, and assisting with conferences and events organized by SIPRI’s Russia and Eurasia programme. I worked under the supervision of Ekaterina

Klimenko and Neil Melvin. Both researchers were always ready to comment on my work and help me to excel to a higher level. I gained a great amount of knowledge in the sphere I focus on. I was lucky to be supervised by professionals, who set a great example and provide with an access to a larger, worldwide network of experts.

It was great to be working together with alumna from the same institution. Ekaterina joined SIPRI right after the school in Geneva, where she was accepted as an OSCE Academy alumna, and became a researcher at SIPRI several years ago. She is very responsive and kind person. She takes on great, time-consuming tasks like the organization of Secure Cities conference with the participation of the King of Sweden and contributes to it all her time. She sets a great example” – Lidiya Chikalova.

“Having an OSCE Academy student as an intern was certainly an interesting experience. First, was nice to have a person who could tell me the latest news about the Academy and its staff. Second, I could relate to Lidiya’s experiences and her requirement of the internship as I was an OSCE Academy student myself and remember what I wanted out of this internship. It is also good to have an OSCE Academy student as an intern as they are always highly qualified and easy to work in a multicultural environment” – Ekaterina Klimenko ‘10.



LEARNING, TEACHING AND TRANSFORMING IN GENEVA

Every year one of the graduates of the OSCE Academy receives a European Scholarship for Central Asia to study at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) and the Global Studies Institute (GSI) of the University of Geneva. The scholarship of 2015-2016 was received by Rashid Gabdulkhakov '13.

The European Scholarship for Central Asia which enabled me to spend eight wonderful months at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) and the University of Geneva (UNIGE) truly changed my life for the better. I was honored and privileged to represent our beloved region of Central Asia at this incredible international platform. As the programme primarily attracts mid-career professionals from Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Ministries of Defence and such, it was a unique opportunity to

learn and share. While embracing new perspectives shared by colleagues in class, I took the opportunity to share academic and civil perspectives on a variety of security challenges that we covered during the course.

Everything about the programme is fascinating and stimulating, from the building facilities of the Maison de la Paix where you can write on walls, to the curriculum and skill sets of GCSP and UNIGE staff who go above and beyond to deliver a world-class

course with progressive methods of adult education. We had 24 people from 24 countries in this program – the world's leading universities do not offer such a diverse educational environment. Writing this text is taking me back to the wonderful memories of the very first days in Geneva when we had our teambuilding activity which involved a hiking adventure with timed tasks to complete and a walk through fields and forests for some 20 kilometers – from day one we were trained to handle any challenge far beyond the classroom.

Being the 8th OSCE Academy alumnus who took part in the programme, I was the graduate of GCSP's 30th International Training Course which nowadays carries the name of Leadership in International Security Course (LISC). The leadership aspect of the programme offered by the Centre for Creative Leadership (CCL) was very relevant, timely, comprehensive and beneficial for the group and in some aspects for the world, given the fact that many of my group mates went straight back to their high-ranking responsible positions. Our leadership training began with understanding what leadership is, what type of leaders we are as individuals and what our leadership strengths and weaknesses are. We were trained to handle challenging situations, be it a tough press conference in the studio or a crisis situation handled in a bunker beneath a football field. We acquired presentation and media skills, strategic communication and crisis management skills, research, debate, lobbying and strategic foresight skills. This toolkit is priceless.

I cannot imagine a better city than Geneva for this programme. Geneva has a truly international

spirit. I conducted research on migration and coverage of refugee inflow in mass media. Within a five minute walk at my disposal were world-class professionals from the IOM, UNHCR, Red Cross, Doctors without Borders, and nearly 300 other international organizations.

It was a nice surprise to be taught again by very well known and respected individuals at the OSCE Academy - Dr Pal Dunay and Dr Tim Epkenhans. Dr Dunay took the group through such topics as the OSCE, North Atlantic Cooperation, Russia, Central Asia and post-Soviet space; he introduced historical points that echo in today's international affairs and put the group into the shoes

Free time was a rare occasion, yet there was never a dull moment in the course.

The programme made me a better leader not only at work, but in my personal life as well. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr Pal Dunay for continuously supporting Central Asia and the OSCE Academy, for all the work he does supporting and lobbying the academic and professional interests of the OSCE Academy alumni. I hope that the European Scholarship will continue being and that Central Asian students will continue representing the region in this incredible academic and professional platform that the GCSP is. The world is faced with a

“Geneva and the GCSP has transformed us all and this course is a true resemblance of a rare case when the knowledge meets experience.”

of global leaders to stimulate us to consider all the processes and challenges that impact decisions. Dr Epkenhans gave a lecture on religion in international relations and yet again impressed everyone with his admirable knowledge on the subject, while challenging the group to think beyond and confront personal essentialist biases.

Every day the Programme Organizers brought in security and academic professionals from around the world to work with us.

challenging and diverse number of security threats and Central Asia certainly cannot, by any means, be left out of the discussion and representation.

I am forever grateful for this experience. I would like to thank all of my group mates for the knowledge and experience that we shared. Geneva and the GCSP has transformed us all and this course is a true resemblance of a rare case when the knowledge meets experience.

ONE-YEAR STAY AT NUPI



The Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) has been one of the biggest donors and partners of the OSCE Academy for many years. NUPI pays special attention to the alumni network and provides different professional opportunities, in particular to those graduates, who are interested in research. Since 2012 two alumni per year receive a chance to become NUPI research fellows for one year. Current Research Fellows are Gulaikhan Kubaeva '14 and Nurbek Bekmurzaev '14, who tell us about their experience at NUPI:

Gulaikhan Kubaeva:

Working at NUPI and living in Norway has been one of the life-changing experiences for me this year. NUPI is a great place for research career development: it is equipped with all the necessary facilities so that a researcher would not feel any limitation in his/her work. At NUPI, I had a chance to work and exchange knowledge with many highly qualified researchers with international background. During this year, NUPI provided a lot of support in building my future research career and preparing to pursue a PhD degree. In June, I had the possibility to participate in a conference at the Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition



GCSP

Geneva Centre for Security Policy
Where knowledge meets experience

WWW.GCSP.CH

Economies with my article and now I am working on to publish it. I would like to thank my supervisor at NUPI, Professor Indra Overland for the continuous support to my research initiatives and suggestions.

Besides the work experience, living in Norway taught me to love nature and sports. Moreover, the NUPI fellowship bestowed me my fun and adventurous friend, co-fellow, Nurbek! We became partners in exploring beautiful landscapes of Norway through hiking in the north of the country. Indeed, this year will be an unforgettable memory. I am grateful to the OSCE Academy for giving this opportunity to us and I encourage the present and future graduates to apply for this programme!



Exploring Norway

Nurbek Bekmurzaev:

My stay at NUPI and Norway in general has been nothing but fascinating and filled with experiences and adventures. From the first day when I landed in Oslo on a freezing cold Saturday night in January until the freezing cold afternoon today, when I am reflecting on the last 10 months that went so fast – too fast, I would say.

NUPI seemed and – expectedly – turned out to be a great research institution for my growth and development as a professional and, more importantly, as an academic. As part of NUPI's research group on Russia, Eurasia and the Arctic, I had a hand in organizing and conducting various events such as the Annual Russia Conference, which brings together renowned scholars studying Russia. Having recently graduated, I did not have a lot of experience incorporating

theories into empirical research, so my decision to come to NUPI was largely motivated to bridge that gap. I was happy to see upon my arrival how much theory oriented NUPI is. Currently, me and my colleague are working on an article that explores Uzbekistan's foreign policy using discourse analysis theory. In addition, I am working on a research project that studies religion and the media in Kyrgyzstan using the mediatization theory, so my academic expectations have been more than met.

This year would be less pleasant if it wasn't for the endless opportunities Norway provides for adventure junkies and lovers of outdoors. I have had a chance to travel above the Arctic circle to witness Norway's most popular tourist attraction – the Northern lights that captivate attention and leave in the state of utter

admiration. Lofoten islands, located in the north of Norway, are the world's most beautiful islands, and I was happy to explore them on a multi-day hiking trip with Gulaikhan and Giorgi. Last, but certainly not least, I discovered Brazilian jiu-jitsu in Oslo and fell in love with this sport, which has helped me to get into a great shape, but also – surprisingly – get better in all the other things I do, including my work.

I am grateful for the opportunities the OSCE Academy provides to its students and want to thank NUPI for being a wonderful host this year. My stay here will certainly go as a very special experience in my life.

NUPI Norwegian Institute
of International
Affairs

WWW.NUPI.NO



ALUMNI TRAVEL GRANTS

The OSCE Academy, with the support of the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), continues supporting its alumni in their professional and academic developments in several ways, one of which is providing them with Travel Grants on competitive basis. In 2016 Akmaljon Abdullaev, graduate of 2005, received a grant to participate in the fifth regional conference of the Central Eurasian Studies Society (CESS) at Kazan Federal University on 2-4 June 2016.

The travel grant from the OSCE Academy in Bishkek to present my paper at the Central Eurasian Study Society (CESS) conference in Kazan had an impact on my research. The event was hosted by the Institute of International Relations, History and Oriental Studies of Kazan Federal University that was founded in 1804 and is now among the leading educational and research institutions of the Russian Federation. About 200 scholars from over thirty countries participated at the conference and the programme of the event consisted of fifty panels and keynote speeches by Professor Michael Kemper of the University of Amsterdam as well as Professor Taufik Ibrahim of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences. My paper was based on my

current PhD research project, at the University of world economy and diplomacy, "History of social movements in Central Asia: before and after independence." I presented preliminary findings of my research and the conference was an excellent opportunity for me to streamline my research methods. More specifically, overall feedbacks from members of the panel and the discussant convinced me to narrow down my research due to time and space limitations. Attending other panels of the conference has been crucial in learning not only advantages of my approach but also drawbacks.

The organizers of the conference had set up social events, which was crucial in making new friends and contacts. Thus, in addition to meeting prominent scholars during the event, I established a

network with other PhD students whose research projects are relevant to my field of expertise and exchanged some ideas. I believe, maintaining network with them will definitely impact the quality of my dissertation in the long run. Besides the conference, it was also an opportunity for a small OSCE Academy alumni reunion where I met Svetlana Dzardanova, Serik Beimenbetov and Nurlan Kabdykhak. There is no doubt that the travel grant is one of the excellent mechanisms of the Academy to support career and personal developments of the

alumni. I am grateful to NUPI as the donor of the travel grant and the Academy for outstanding administration.

Based in North America, CESS is an international organization for scholars concerned with the Central Eurasian region and it seeks to promote high standards of research and teaching, to foster communication among scholars of Central Eurasia through meetings, publications, and networking, and to facilitate interaction among scholars at different stages in their career and in different places

around the world. The conference programme is available at http://www.centraleurasia.org/assets/conf/cess-2016-kazan_program.pdf

The second Alumni Travel Grant of 2016 was received by Saltanat Mamytova '14 EGD (a Logistics Manager at Cenko Logix LLC), for attending the course and receiving Logistics & Supply Chain Management Certificate accredited by AIPS USA at Laurels Institute Dubai on 5-8 November 2016 (<http://www.laurelsinstitute.com/>).

UP AND UP: ON THE WAY TO PHD WITH THE BIELEFELD GRADUATE SCHOOL IN HISTORY AND SOCIOLOGY

Here, Natalia tells a story about her experience at BGHS.

After graduation some alumni immediately continue their studies and apply for PhD programmes, others prefer to apply their knowledge in practice and work. Sometimes alumni combine work and preparation for further studies. Natalia Zakharchenko '12 has dedicated several years after graduation to research activities and now started working towards an application for PhD. Natalia was accepted to a four-month Start-up Scholarship offered by the Bielefeld Graduate School in History and Sociology (BGHS). This scholarship is offered to MA holders and provides a chance to develop potential research projects through intensive discussions with the peers and supervisors, as well as a designed programme of workshops and trainings. The final career destination of most of Start-up alumni becomes PhD at prestigious universities in Germany and outside of it.



Start-Up Fellows 2016, Photo credit: Thomas Abel/BGHS

Decisions. Sometimes the fear to make them prevents us from achieving beautiful things. Academia is not an exception. Both, for fears and for beautiful things. One of my former supervisors, a researcher with a big name, dropped once that “you, women from academia in developing

countries, undeservedly but persistently lack confidence in your own skills”. I think confidence is often “cured” with experience, especially, international one. I spent four months in an incredible academic and social environment, trained how to become a PhD student, witnessed life examples



Meet the Start-ups seminar. Photo credit: Thomas Abel/BGHS

thereof, and learnt from peers with talented hearts and minds in the small, cosy city of Bielefeld, Germany.

Our group of six people was comprised of “PhD-wanters” from different parts of the world: Hungary, Russia, Ethiopia, Moldova and Iran. And me, of course, from Kyrgyzstan. Diverse in cultures, values, beliefs, we were even more different in our primary disciplines: from history to journalism, from political science to anthropology. Working together (peacefully) implied getting “drowned” in the world of doubtful methodologies, suspicious theories, and illogical analyses. Did I mention that we were also living together? Joking apart, we were united by one very strong and important innate part of us – passion for science. Passion was everywhere – from administration to current PhD students

at BGHS. The overwhelming majority of people were incredibly dedicated and indulged in science. This was almost contagious and resulted in our full dedication during the intensive research workshops, trainings and presentations.

I intentionally highlighted “social” when describing the environment above. A long-time fan of Chekhov and his “people should be beautiful in every way...”, I believe it is very important to be happy in different aspects of one’s life. “PhD is not your life, PhD is a part of it”, - confirmed our research coach, Vera Zegers. Inspired, we started organizing cultural parties at the institute, movie nights with *The Game of Thrones*, evening concerts with Guitar Hero and we made sure to travel around Germany. Social life helped us engage with other people from the institute, establish fruitful networks

and friendships. Learning German (the institute also provides this opportunity) opened the world to people you meet in daily life. We were loud, imprudent, and sometimes even arrogant when arguing with peers, but truly dedicated and curious.

Just to repeat myself, it was a great opportunity from all angles and I would encourage all interested OSCE Academy alumni to apply for the scholarship and gain their own remarkable experience. I know how competitive alumni are and how much they can potentially contribute to the school and their peers.

Decisions. Sometimes the courage to make them leaves us with incredible memories. And remember, that “success is a state of mind” (Dr J. Brothers).

DEALING WITH THE PAST FOR A BETTER FUTURE. SHOAH IN UKRAINE: INTERVIEWING THE SURVIVORS

It is important to do research on current history and developments, but it is no less important to work on major past events, that played a big role in world history. Alexander Lipsky, our graduate of 2009, had a chance to participate in field research and interview Holocaust victims in Ukraine. Alexander describes his experience in this challenging part of the project.

I have worked for the Claims Conference (CC) for almost 4 years now, but I had no idea that I would get a chance to participate in an on-field project. I work mostly with documents and databases, and our office has never participated in any kind of trips. Nevertheless, the unbelievable has happened again - I was among the 2 staff members from the Frankfurt office (along with colleagues from other offices) to get invited for the Ukraine project. There is no doubt that I have said yes immediately.

My employer, the Claims Conference (full name: Jewish Claims Conference against Germany, <http://www.claimscon.org/>) is an international organization founded in 1951 that distributes compensations from the German government and other sources to the Jewish victims worldwide that were persecuted by the Nazi regime and its allies. The conference consists of many international and national



Jewish organizations and funds. It is involved in many projects, such as restitution of property, monthly and one-time compensations, compensations to the victims of medical experiments, remembrance and reconciliation, etc. My office is responsible for the one-time compensations to the victims who reside in the former Soviet

Union. It is one of the latest projects that started back at the end of 2012. These victims were unable to receive compensations because of the Soviet Union's stance and then administrative problems after independence. There are also several hundreds of Holocaust survivors in Central Asia, mostly in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, about hundred in



Alexander and his colleagues in Odessa

Kyrgyzstan, and a dozen in Tajikistan and Turkmenistan each.

The Ukraine Project is the 4th project conducted by our office in the former Soviet Union (after Moldova and Russia). It included the three biggest Ukrainian cities – Kyiv, Dnipro and Odesa, with the biggest number of Holocaust survivors who applied for, but for different reasons have not yet received compensations from CC. Our goal was to meet as many of the Holocaust survivors as possible, to gather the necessary documents and conduct an interview about the persecution. For me, Ukraine was the most exciting country to go for such a project, not only because it is my motherland, but also because it had the biggest Jewish population, was occupied for several years, had many ghettos and concentration camps, and for sure would offer many sad but yet interesting stories.

Kyiv, which was our first stop, is the biggest and most prosperous city of Ukraine, with probably the largest Jewish community. I was very excited to meet our claimants personally, as I mostly know them from documents and applications. They brought many documents with them, along with pictures and personal stories. Many people were excited and curious to meet us, and many were nervous as they did not know what “interview” meant. They expected some sort of interrogation or questioning, but when they saw that we were friendly and asked simple questions, they calmed down. We have even visited those people at home who were unable to come and meet us because of their state of health.

Many people were telling terrible stories about what they had to live through. It was striking to see men and women crying even after so many years. Our job as an inter-

viewer was to stay concentrated, to calm them down and direct the interview to the important details that could help to decide their claims positively. To say that this was not easy is to say nothing. We were physically and emotionally exhausted at the end of the day, so that we had to go out every evening to distract and recharge for the next day.

The main impression for me in Kyiv was that people are so well-educated and many of them speak Yiddish language (language of Eastern European Jews, based on German with the mix of words from Polish, Ukrainian and other local languages). It was a dialect of its own, and for many people it has been the second or third native language. Others could understand or knew many of the Yiddish words and expressions, songs, prayers, etc. The Jewish culture and traditions are thriving in Kyiv, and people

embrace their roots and culture.

After a week in Kyiv our team split in two – majority went to Kharkiv, and few of us left for Dnipro.

Dnipro is the second biggest city in Ukraine; it is also an industrial and financial center, and recently has become an important military post due to the ATO in Eastern Ukraine. Many local Jewish people belonged to the working class and worked at the industrial factories. It also has a significant Jewish community with the biggest kosher mall in Ukraine with hotels, museums, restaurants, shops, a synagogue, etc. It is not uncommon to see Orthodox Jews here or tourists from Israel.

We spoke not only to the people from Dnipro, but also from the regional cities such as Pavlograd, Kamianske (former Dneprodzerzhinsk), Balivka, etc. Here many of the Jewish people spoke Ukrainian only, so I had to conduct couple of interviews in Ukrainian. It was striking for me how many people were unable to flee during the war and had to live in hiding or under false identity on the occupied territory. There were many stories about how people were betrayed by their friends and neighbors, while there were even more stories where local people helped and hid the Jews. Many also described striking details about the Nazi and Romanian soldiers that occupied the region. Also here many people spoke Yiddish, proving that this language had strong roots in Eastern Ukraine.

Our final stop was in Odesa. It has become an important cultural and touristic centre, especially after Crimea was annexed by Russia. It has also one of the oldest and biggest Jewish communities in Ukraine, with the culture and city image built around it. All the hard work in Kyiv and Dnipro – long working hours and stress – did the trick and I caught a cold. Nevertheless, there was still so much to

do, and I decided to go on with the project. I took all the pre-cautions, but still conducted interviews and visited people at home.

Two major issues were striking for me in Odesa. First of them was that there were so many people that we refer to as “fetus cases” - their pregnant mothers fled from Ukraine fearing persecution, and claimants were already born in evacuation. It is not possible to conduct interviews with such people as they have no memories of their own, so that documents really help in this case. Second, those who could not flee told stories how they hid in catacombs for months. People would hide for months in those caves, going out only occasionally at their risk to get food. After numerous raids by German and Romanian soldiers, people had to flee from catacombs to the nearby villages.

Throughout the project I have seen two interesting trends. One of the most striking observations was that victims do not see Germans as enemy. Of course, there were separate cases where people were angry or suspicious, but they still cooperated. Almost everyone was very polite, friendly and hospitable. Many were surprised to hear that we are Russian or Ukrainian native speakers, because we were introduced as people who come from Germany. People often said that they do not blame German people, but the Nazi regime. Among those who stayed on the occupied territory, it was uncommon to hear that there were separate officers who were merciful, helped to flee, or fed them with chocolate (they explained it by the guess that they probably had children of their own at home in Germany). Some people said they would like to move to Germany someday (and many already have moved). For me this was a clear sign that, along with other measures, financial compensations,

despite being relatively small, did contribute to reconciliation.

My second observation was that people surviving the Holocaust speaking about persecution mentioned the Soviet Union. After Ukraine was liberated, the Soviet administration was very suspicious of those who lived under occupation. All were interrogated and investigated, and if there was any doubt that a person collaborated with Nazi forces, people were executed or sent to Gulags. Many talked about anti-Semitism in everyday life, how they were abused and prevented from certain jobs and spheres, how they would have to hide their ethnic and religious identity to succeed. For me it challenged once again the myth that the Soviet Union was a tolerant and internationalist country where all ethnicities lived in peace and harmony. Many victims viewed the Soviet regime being as bad as the Nazi regime, if not worse.

There is so much to tell about the project, the personal stories and the whole experience. All I know is that, despite it was very challenging and stressful, I would most certainly do it again, and I really hope that there are more projects like that in the future, in Ukraine or elsewhere. For me the project has definitely paid off. The majority of those who were interviewed by us have now received compensations. I remember how glad I was every time I saw that interview conducted or document was gathered by me, and this helped to make positive decision on the claim. I am sure these compensations would help people not only to improve their financial situation, but also to forgive and reconcile. After all, despite all the inhumane cruelty and darkness that happened in Ukraine almost 80 years ago, life goes on and the Jewish community in Ukraine thrives, making Holocaust a part of the painful history, but yet the past.

“A YEAR OF COMMUNITY SERVICE”

The year of 2016 was announced “A Year of Community Service” by the OSCE Academy Alumni Office and it resulted in a number of charity events for children from the Centre for Protecting Children in Bishkek <http://streetchild.ktnet.kg/index.php/en/>. Starting from January, almost every month, the Academy’s alumni, students and staff visited the Centre and spent time with children playing, making handmade cards, decorating their yard with the tire-sculptures, celebrating major holidays together, visiting cinema and big fairs and etc. We would like to keep this tradition going, as bringing joy, care and love to children, who face many difficulties in their lives is something that can bring positive changes, as children are the future of our society.

Special thanks to the Academy’s staff, Svetlana Dzardanova ’09, Jeyran Shafiyeva ’16, Mahabat Murzakanova ’08, Diana Mamatova ’09, Aichurek Kurmanova ’14, Zhyldyz Sultanbekova ’14, Asel Abdyramanova ’14, Murodjon Khalikov ’16, Alisher Akhmetov ’16, Malika Juraeva ’16, Anastasiya Gryadasova ’16 for their constant support of charity events and to Lira Ajikova ’07, who organized a big holiday to the children with the kids show and many presents, donated to the Centre.



ALUMNI HOBBIES

The OSCE Academy graduates are successful young professionals that do an important and serious work. Nevertheless, almost everyone has a hobby and sometimes much unexpected. In this issue four of our alumni shared about their hobbies:

ANNA OTIEVA, GRADUATE OF 2009. FENCING



Photo credit to Anick Otieva

My passion for fencing has a long story and it’s more than just a sport to me. The song of a blade always attracted but I never seemed to have the chance or time to listen to it. I remember thinking that fencing was one of the coolest things one could do regardless of gender. We, people frequently waive away the chance when it comes to our dreams. Too late, too busy, too old, and etc. Indians have a good saying “Zendegi na milegi do bara”- You won’t get this life again. It was only two years ago that I devoted my time to joining the fencing school.

When I did get to take lessons, I mostly fence foil at first, then epee. It was interesting and I felt happy. After a month of intensive training, I was noticed by the saber coach and he invited me to join his team. The only problem was that there were no girls sabrease in Armenia at that moment, so I was not sure whether I would enjoy fighting with men. I tell you, I forgot all about it and everything else as soon as I wielded the slim blade of a sabre and heard its song in my heart. Sabre became my passion with its elegant dynamics twisting my life in a new direction. Accomplish your dreams my friends!

IRINA MALYUCHENKO, GRADUATE OF 2013. DRAWING AND PAINTING (ARTS)



I had an interest in drawing since childhood and could spend several hours depicting princesses, dogs and apple trees. My parents have noticed that and enlisted me in art classes to help continue pursue my interest. In the art school we were taught different art forms such as drawing, painting, sculpture, crafts and even the history of arts but perhaps the most fascinating thing for me was “en plein air” or plein air painting - painting outdoors. Art became an inherent part of my life, my hobby, my savior. In five years I successfully graduated from the art school but

have not started a professional art career. Despite this, I still draw from time to time mostly small cards for my friends. The only thing I need is inspiration and crayons, the rest is the result of my imagination.



GUZAL ABDIRAZAKOVA, GRADUATE OF 2013. FLY YOGA

“My hobby is fly yoga. I love taking a break in the middle of the working day and relax for 1.5 hours and forget about the daily worries. It helps me to be calm and stay positive!”



MADINA MURATOVA, GRADUATE OF 2015. EMBROIDERY AND KNITTING (HANDCRAFTING)

Since my childhood I was fond of so many types of handcrafting that it is really hard to recall them all. Some I learned to make very well, some I started to make and forgot already.

In primary school we had a wonderful teacher, who developed in us an interest to prepare decorative items out of different threads’ and textiles’ leftovers. From that time, I was fond of macramé, several types of embroidery



(cross-stitching, ribbon embroidery and later suzani), quilling, knitting and crochet. For me, handcrafting is the way to distract myself from reality. While studying at AUCA, I found a way to manage with stress by knitting scarfs, as you knit the long piece without thinking of its shape and decoration. By the time of Bachelor thesis defence everyone around had already a scarf.

I also took the needles and threads to knit while studying at the OSCE Academy, however, the studies were too intensive. After the graduation at the OSCE Academy, I had a break of 4 months, where I attempted to sew clothing, but it ended up with making suzani (the photo is attached). Suzani is a local embroidery technique, where the textile is decorated with different ornaments. Each region has its own ornaments and colors, the history of which is another interesting topic to study.

MA IN POLITICS AND SECURITY PROGRAMME 2015-2016



Abdul Hasib Ghafori,
Afghanistan



Aidai Erkinbek kyzy,
Kyrgyzstan



Alisher Akhmetov,
Kazakhstan



Anastasiya Griadasova,
Kyrgyzstan



Anna Shveimer,
Kazakhstan



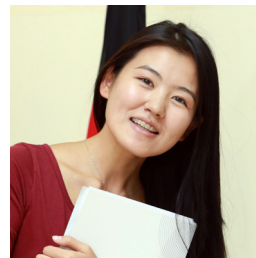
Asem Asfandiarova,
Kyrgyzstan



Daniel Dushmanov,
Kazakhstan



Farrukhruz Konunov,
Tajikistan



Galina Khegay,
Uzbekistan



Harry Roberts, UK



Inna Kuzmenko,
Kazakhstan



Jeyran Shafiyeva,
Turkmenistan



Kseniia Maiatskaia,
Kyrgyzstan



Lena Petrosian,
Turkmenistan



Lidiya Chikalova,
Turkmenistan



Madina
Abdumamadova,
Tajikistan



Malika Juraeva,
Tajikistan



Mohammad Hasan
Raha, Afghanistan



Mohammad Mohsin
Jamal, Afghanistan



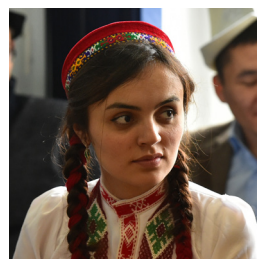
Murodjon Khalikov,
Uzbekistan



Rahimullah Kakar,
Afghanistan



Ryan Johnson, USA



Shamima Oshurbekova,
Tajikistan



Temirlan Abdyldaev,
Kyrgyzstan

MA IN ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2015-2016



Alan Mamatov,
Kyrgyzstan



Asel Timur kyzy,
Kyrgyzstan



Aziz Tyuryaev, Tajikistan



Begaiym Musabekova,
Kyrgyzstan



Daniyar Kamalov,
Kyrgyzstan



Erkinai Derkenbaeva,
Kyrgyzstan



Feruza Abdurashitova,
Uzbekistan



Guljahon Pirmamadova,
Tajikistan



Gulnoza Khodizoda,
Tajikistan



Gulnur Ryskulova,
Kyrgyzstan



Ivana Vuchkova,
Macedonia



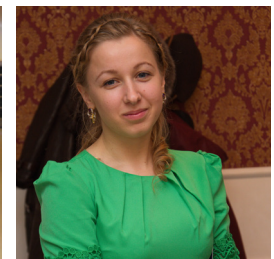
Madinahon Ilmiaminova,
Uzbekistan



Malika Dzhurazoda,
Tajikistan



Najibullah Zaki,
Afghanistan



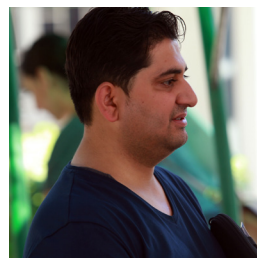
Olga Studenko,
Kyrgyzstan



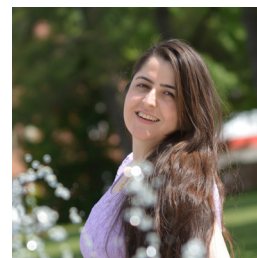
Parvina
Mirzomustaqimova,
Tajikistan



Shakhnozakhon
Sharafutdinova,
Kyrgyzstan



Sharif Danesh,
Afghanistan



Soona Kamjo Khal
Mohammad, Afghanistan



Tengiz Chikanayev,
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