

The 11th Annual Life in Kyrgyzstan Conference 2025

Organizers: University of Central Asia (UCA), Kyrgyz Republic
The Leibniz Institute of Vegetable and Ornamental Crops (IGZ), Germany
International Security and Development Center (ISDC), Germany

Partners: ADB, AUCA, World Bank, UNFPA

Venue: Orion Hotel, 21 Erkindik Ave, Bishkek

Date: October 10-11, 2025

PROGRAM

DAY 1: Friday, October 10, 2025

Bishkek time, GMT+6; [click the room name to join online](#)

08:00-09:00 **Registration of Participants & Welcome Coffee**

09:00-09:20 **OPENING REMARKS**

Room [KARKYRA](#)
Moderator: **Dr Asel Murzakulova**, UCA
Eran Edirisinghe, Dean of Research, UCA
Zheng Wu, Country Director, ADB
Elizaveta Perova, Senior Economist, World Bank
Baktybek Kainazarov, Head of Office, UNFPA
Timothy O'Connor, President, AUCA
Tilman Brück, Professor, Humboldt University, IGZ, ISDC

09:20-10:30 **PLENARY SESSION 1.1 Life in Kyrgyzstan Study 2025: Data and Research Agenda**

Room [KARKYRA](#)
Moderator: **Tilman Brück**, Humboldt University, IGZ, ISDC
Damir Esenaliev, IGZ/ISDC
Wave 7 of the Life in Kyrgyzstan Study - data collection results
Francisca Castro, ISDC
Polarization in Kyrgyzstan
Stefan Buchmayer, GIZ
Findings and work plans for GIZ-PREVECA project in Central Asia
Philipp Schroeder, Nazarbayev University
Understanding Youth Perspectives through Event-Based and Applied Qualitative Research: Insights from the GIZ-PREVECA Project in Kyrgyzstan

10:30-11:50 **PLENARY SESSION 1.2 Policy Session: Recent Economic Developments in Kyrgyzstan**

Room [KARKYRA](#)
Moderator: **Damir Esenaliev**, IGZ/ISDC
Choro Seyitov, First Deputy Ministry of Economy and Commerce of KR
Country's Development Strategy till 2040
Azat Kozubekov, Deputy Chairman, NBKR
Monetary and financial developments in Kyrgyzstan
Kanat Tilekeyev, Associate Director, IPPA, UCA
Economic and social developments from academic perspective

11:50-12:00 **Group Photo**

12:00-13:00 **Lunch**

13:00-14:10 **PARALLEL SESSIONS**

SESSION 1.3 **The World Bank Session: Perspectives on Middle Class, Fiscal Policy, and Public Voices in Kyrgyzstan**

Room

[KARKYRA](#)

Moderator:

Aibek Ashirov, World Bank

Elizaveta Perova, World Bank

Middle Class study in the Kyrgyz Republic

Gohar Gyulumyan, World Bank

Findings of the Public Finance Review for the Kyrgyz Republic

Aibek Ashirov, World Bank

Findings from Listening to the Kyrgyz Republic Survey

SESSION 1.4 **Agrarian Transformations and Rural Change in Central Asia**

Room

[BOSOGO](#)

Moderator:

Azamat Azarov, UCA

Kanat Tilekeyev, UCA

Rural Youth: Developments in Central Asia

Irène Mestre, IFEAC

Contested transitions: exploring the narratives of agri-food systems in Central Asia

Asel Murzakulova, UCA

Agrarian dynamics and migration: comparative analysis of agroecological zones in Kyrgyzstan

SESSION 1.5 **Gender Inequality in Civic Engagement, Rural Work, and Land Access**

Room

[AKSAY](#)

Moderator:

Saule Chalbasova, UCA

Marzhan Aikimbaeva, UCA

Exploring Gender Disparities in Civic Life: Evidence from Kyrgyzstan

Zalina Enikeeva, UCA

Women in Kyrgyzstan 1990 – 2024: Family, Work, and Social Norms

Nagima Shukurbekova, UCA

Rural Youth Perspectives on Land Ownership and Decision-Making Power: A Gendered Analysis from Central Asia

14:10-15:20 **PARALLEL SESSIONS**

SESSION 1.6 **Behavioral Preferences Under Institutional and Environmental Constraints in Central Asia**

Room

[KARKYRA](#)

Moderator:

Kadyrbek Sultakeev, AUCA

Nodir Djanibekov, IAMO

From theory to field: Measuring farmers' risk and time preferences

Marlen Tynaliev, IAMO

Under irrigation water scarcity: Exploring the behavioral responses of smallholders in Kyrgyzstan

Abdusame Tadjiev, IAMO

Institutions and preferences: How cotton sector governance shapes farmers' risk and time preferences in Uzbekistan

SESSION 1.7 **Urban Resilience in Kyrgyzstan: Legal, Digital, and Design Responses from Naryn**

Room

[BOSOGO](#)

Moderator:

Kanat Tilekeyev, UCA

Madina Junussova, UCA

Design-driven resilience and participatory urbanism

Sarygul Alchynbaev, TOLESFOR (online)

Legal and policy frameworks for climate-informed urban planning

Chynarkan Saparova, UCA

Geospatial data and GIS for decision-making in local governments

SESSION 1.8 Mobilization, Memory, and Media: Perspectives on Central Asian Transformations

Room

[AKSAY](#)

Moderator:

Bakhytzhan Kurmanov, UCA

Niginakhon Uralova, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz (online) & Svetlana Dzardanova, Freedom for Eurasia

Framing Femicide: Analyzing News Reporting in Uzbekistan (2014–2024)

Niginakhon Uralova, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz (online)

Negotiating the Soviet Past: How Young People Navigate State and Family Narratives in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan

Mukaram Toktogulova, Esimde Research Platform

Voice of the People - Time of Change: Social-Democratic Movements in Kyrgyzstan in 1985-1991

15:20-15:40 *Coffee Break*

15:40-16:50 **PARALLEL SESSIONS**

SESSION 1.9 Session by WFP: Food Security and Nutrition

Room

[KARKYRA](#)

Moderator:

Anastasia Iakovleva, WFP

Giulio Porelli and Evgenii Shibkov, WFP

Impact of structural stressors and climate shocks on household food security

Aizhan Erisheva, WFP

Social and behaviour change communication and adoption of climate-resilient behaviour by rural communities

Kanykei Mukambetova, WFP

The role of schools as platforms for promoting healthy dietary habits among children and their families

SESSION 1.10 Socio-Economic and Policy Pathways for Sustainable Development in Kyrgyzstan: Gender Equality, Public Health, and Agricultural Transformation

Room

[BOSOGO](#)

Moderator:

Maral Sagynalieva, Ala-Too International University

Medet Tulegenov, Ala-Too International University

Gender perspectives on norms of a good citizen: evidence from surveys in Kyrgyzstan

Bekchoro Aliiaskarov, Ala-Too International University

Modern challenges in prevention of substance use among youth in Kyrgyzstan: perspectives of criminology

Maral Sagynalieva, Ala-Too International University

Opportunities and Barriers for Kyrgyz Farmers in the Transition to Sustainable Agriculture

SESSION 1.11 Women's Agency, Identity, and Well-Being in Central Asia

Room

[AKSAY](#)

Moderator:

Asel Murzakulova, UCA

Altyn Kapalova, UCA

Women's Mental Health Recovery Practices in Traditional Kyrgyz Culture

Damir Esenaliev, IGZ/ISDC

Almash and Beyond: Lived Experiences of Daughters Named in Hope of Sons

Mohru Mardonova, IFPRI (**online**)

Double burden or newfound freedom? Women's empowerment amid large-scale male labor migration from rural Tajikistan

16:50-18:00 **PLENARY SESSION 1.12 Keynote Speech**

Room [KARKYRA](#)

Moderator: **Prof Tilman Brück**, Humboldt University, IGZ, ISDC

Dr Kathleen Hermans, IAMO: **Stay or Go? When Climate Change Reshapes Lives**

18:00-21:00 *Reception at Orion Hotel*

DAY 2: Saturday, October 11, 2025

Bishkek time, GMT+6; [click the room name to join online](#)

08:00-08:50 **Registration of Participants & Welcome Coffee**

09:00-10:30 **PARALLEL SESSIONS**

SESSION 2.1 Rural Economies in Transition: Livestock, Crop Protection, and Climate Adaptation in Central Asia and

Room [KARKYRA](#)

Moderator: **Damir Esenaliev**, IGZ/ISDC

Martin Petrick, Justus Liebig University Giessen

Livestock value chains in Central Asia: From smallholders to corporate business?

Jakhongir Babadjanov, FAO Uzbekistan (**online**)

Understanding farmers' decisions to adopt biological crop protection approaches in Uzbekistan

Kadyrbek Sultakeev, AUCA / Justus Liebig University Giessen

The role of livestock as wealth, identity and honor: economic and anthropological analysis of livestock in Kyrgyz society

Tisorn Songsermsawas, IFAD

Adoption of climate adaptation practices and livelihoods of pasture herders: Evidence from Mongolia

SESSION 2.2 New Approaches to Industry Assessment: Theory, Practice, and Lessons Learned

Room [BOSOGO](#)

Moderator: **Elnura Kazakbaeva**, Evidence Central Asia

Kairatbek Dzhamangulov, National Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic

Youth Economic Development Index – How Will the New Index Contribute to Improving the Lives of Young People?

Zhakshylyk Aitbayev, Evidence Central Asia

Who Is Driving Kyrgyzstan's Creative Industries? – Sector Champions

Elnura Kazakbaeva, Evidence Central Asia

Evaluation of the Social Assistance Program for Low-Income Families in the Kyrgyz Republic – Results of a Comprehensive Study

Kunduz Kydyrova, Evidence Central Asia (**online**)

Developing a Monitoring and Evaluation System for the Green Economy Program – Insights and Lessons Learned

SESSION 2.3 Socio-Economic and Climate Risks in Kyrgyz Agricultural Systems

Room [AKSAY](#)

Moderator: **Kanat Tilekeyev**, UCA

Md Sofiullah, Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences (**online**)

Socio-economic assessment of existing forest and agroforestry production systems for fruit and nut production in Kyrgyzstan – A field study using Monte-Carlo simulation analysis

Sabina Talantbek kyzy, AUCA

Impact of Multiple Shocks on Agricultural Income in Kyrgyzstan

Salima Bekbolotova, IAMO

Predicting Food Security in Kyrgyzstan: A Machine Learning Approach

Aizhamal Duishonbekova, OSCE Academy

The Impact of Climate Change on Agricultural Output in Kyrgyzstan

10:30-10:50 *Coffee Break*

10:50-12:00 **PLENARY SESSION 2.4 Keynote**

Room [KARKYRA](#)

Moderator: **Damir Esenaliev**, IGZ/ISDC

Dr Asel Doolotkeldieva, University of Potsdam

Towards 'vernacular' Central Asian geopolitics: Russia-Kyrgyzstan/Kazakhstan entanglements after 2022

12:00-13:15 *Lunch*

13:15-14:30 **PARALLEL SESSIONS**

SESSION 2.5 Improving Air Quality Through Nature-Based Solutions: Insights from Science, Practice, and Policy

Room [KARKYRA](#)

Moderator: **Ekaterina Perfilyeva**, UNEP

Jeremie Berlioux, Nature Foundation

Urban Biodiversity and Bioindicators for a Healthy Urban Environment in Bishkek

Anna Kirilenko, Environmental expert

Nature-Based Solutions for Urban Wellbeing and Environmental Resilience in Bishkek

Azat Muradyl, MoveGreen

Local Evidence on the Benefits of Vertical Greening in Bishkek

SESSION 2.6 Russia's War in Ukraine and Its Regional Impact: Perspectives from Central Asia and Beyond

Room [BOSOGO](#)

Moderator: **Tilman Brück**, Humboldt University, IGZ, ISDC

Aleksey Oschepkov, Free University Berlin

The impact of immigration on the native population: Learning from the influx of Ukrainian refugees to Russia in 2014

Ulukbek Beishekeev, University of Hamburg (online)

Russian Attitudes to the War in Ukraine — a Case Study of Kyrgyzstan

Bakhytzhan Kurmanov, UCA

Finding Space for Activism: Understanding Youth Activists in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in the Wake of Russia's War against Ukraine

SESSION 2.7 Glaciers, Rivers, and Traditional Knowledge: Environmental Transformations in Mountain Societies

Room [AKSAY](#)

Moderator: **Kanat Tilekeyev**, UCA

Fasih Uddin, UCA (online)

Glacial Recession processes and Glacial Lake inventories in High Mountain Asian Communities

Asif Khan, SAS UCA (online)

Nature's Living Legacy: Ethnobotanical Wisdom and Indigenous Plant Use in Gulmit, Hunza

Aslam Qadamov, UCA (online)

Climate-Induced Shifts in Seasonal Runoff of the Gunt River: Implications for Agriculture and Hydropower in the Pamirs

14:30-15:00 *Coffee Break*

15:00-16:30 **PARALLEL SESSIONS**

SESSION 2.8 **Adapting to Climate Change: Social, Economic, and Cultural Dimensions**

Room [KARKYRA](#)

Moderator: **Ablay Dosmaganbetov**, UCA

Zhandos Tursumbekov, CERGE-EI

Weather Shocks and Informal Social Networks: Evidence from Kyrgyzstan

Soltobek Sarymsakov, Justus Liebig University Giessen

The social and cultural barriers to the use of renewable energy sources in Kyrgyzstan

James T. Bang, Bard College

Trust, Risk, and Attitudes toward Climate Change: Evidence from Kyrgyzstan

Jules Hugot, ADB

Income Diversification to Manage Climate Risk in Kyrgyzstan

SESSION 2.9 **Women's Agency, Education, and Participation in Contemporary Kyrgyzstan**

Room [BOSOGO](#)

Moderator: **Zalina Enikeeva**, UCA

Chisato Tachibana, University of Tokyo

Does Domestic Violence Law Shift Gender Attitudes and Female Labor Force

Participation in Kyrgyzstan?

Damir Esenaliev, IGZ/ISDC

Female Empowerment and Non-Electoral Political Participation: Experimental Evidence from Kyrgyzstan

Anusha Ashurova, OSCE Academy

Exploring Gender Disparities in Migration Intentions among Kyrgyz Youth: Evidence from the Life in Kyrgyzstan Data 2019

Aizura Batyraliyeva, M-Vector

Education Without Borders: The Portrait of a Kyrgyz Woman in Online Learning

SESSION 2.10 **Poverty, Risk, and the Shadow Economy: Insights from Kyrgyzstan**

Room [AKSAY](#)

Moderator: **Eleanna Pappa**, Humboldt University

Altyn Kapalova, UCA

Cultural Aspects of Poverty Perception in Kyrgyz Rural Areas

Bermet Talasbek kyzy, AUCA

Impact of risk aversion on net worth of households: Survey study in Kyrgyzstan

Aibek Dushebaev, Independent Expert in Macroeconomics

Dynamics of the Shadow Economy in Kyrgyzstan: An Empirical Analysis Based on the MIMIC Model

16:30 **End of LiK conference 2025**