

Kazakhstan (2008– ) The second-largest Open World country after Russia, Kazakhstan is resource-rich, ethnically diverse, and strategically located between Europe and Asia. Rule of law was the focus of Open World's early 2008 programming for Kazakhstan, in support of efforts to strengthen judicial independence and reduce corruption. Upcoming exchanges for Kazakhstan will target e-governance professionals, federal health officials and practitioners, and women economic and educational leaders.

Azerbaijan (2007–) This strategically located, oil-rich, predominantly Muslim South Caucasus nation began participating in Open World in May 2007. Among the first delegates were the president of the Azerbaijan Lawyers Association, the chief political correspondent for a Baku-based newspaper, and a top parliamentary aide. Open World's Azerbaijan programming focuses on two areas—accountable governance and the rule of law—and is aimed at promoting transparency, judicial and legislative independence, and civil and media rights.

Georgia (2007– ) The small, mountainous nation of Georgia lies between Russia and Turkey and at the crossroads of Europe and Asia. Open World launched its Georgia program in February 2007, hosting a group of legal leaders and local officials. Current exchanges support Georgia's initiatives to reform public administration and education, and to prepare for the introduction of jury trials.

Kyrgyzstan (2007– ) This mountainous, predominantly Muslim Central Asian nation began taking part in Open World in June 2007. Four members of parliament were among the participants in the first exchange, which focused on implementing human rights legislation. Rule of law issues are a major theme for current visits. Through these exchanges, Open World seeks to assist Kyrgyzstan in introducing jury trials, tackling corruption, and improving access to justice. The Open World Leadership Center's executive director is a former U.S. ambassador to Kyrgyzstan.

Moldova (2007–) Open World launched its program with this small, economically struggling Eastern European nation in March 2007. Among the early Moldovan participants were newly elected small-town mayors, top anti-human trafficking officials, legal aid providers, and tuberculosis specialists. One emphasis of Open World's current program with Moldova is agribusiness. While the landlocked, largely agrarian country boasts some of Europe's most fertile soil, the agricultural production and marketing system needs modernizing. Accountable governance is another Open World focus, to help government bodies at all levels increase transparency, curb corruption, and foster a culture of public service. Public health constitutes a third main program area for Moldovan exchanges, to support the country's efforts to reduce high HIV and hepatitis infection rates and improve access to primary care.

Tajikistan (2007– ) Open World's first delegates from this rugged, agricultural Central Asian country—four environmental officials and four defense lawyers—arrived in the United States in June 2007. Since then, the program has conducted exchanges for bar association leaders, microfinance experts, water management officials, and senior law enforcement officials, among others. Open World's current programming for Tajikistan emphasizes rule of law, education, public health, and civic participation and elections, and is aimed at supporting efforts to reduce public corruption and widespread poverty.

Turkmenistan (2008– ) An important region along the Silk Road in ancient times, today's Turkmenistan is known for its petroleum and natural gas reserves and cotton production. Open World welcomed its first delegation from Turkmenistan in October 2008. Future exchanges are likely to focus on fiscal accountability, legislative processes, cultural promotion, and education.

Uzbekistan (2003–2004) Open World brought 93 current and future Uzbek leaders to 15 U.S. states for exchanges focused on economic development, health, media, and the rule of law. Participants came from the Constitutional Court, the ministries of finance and public health, the Central Bank of Uzbekistan, Radio Tashkent, and other government agencies and media outlets, as well as nonprofits and businesses across the country. Among the outcomes of these visits: a journalist for a state-run radio channel returned to focus media attention on the issue of human trafficking; the head of the Agro-Industrial Stock Exchange in Tashkent led a successful effort to introduce online trading as a result of visiting the Kansas City Board of Trade, and a doctor in the populous Ferghana Valley briefed 45 of her colleagues on the advanced neonatal techniques she had seen practiced at a Tampa, Fla. hospital.

Ukraine (2003–) Ukraine, Europe’s second-largest country and a key nation in the future of the region, has participated in Open World since December 2003. The Ukraine program is Open World’s second-biggest and second-oldest continuing exchange. Open World’s 850-plus Ukrainian alumni have come from all of the country’s 27 regions and include Supreme Court justices, journalists, judges, lawyers, election experts, and NGO representatives. Programming focuses on accountable governance, NGO development, rule of law, and education, and aims to support Ukraine’s marked progress toward full democracy.

Lithuania (2004) The 97 participants who benefited from Open World’s Lithuania program included a parliamentary adviser, mayors, NGO leaders, agriculturalists, journalists, business executives, and environmental and youth activists. Participants came from 9 of Lithuania’s 10 counties for professional exchanges conducted in 12 U.S. states and the District of Columbia. The main focus areas for these visits were community development, education, entrepreneurship, environmental and rural issues, independent media, NGO development, and youth issues. Open World capped off its 2004 Lithuania exchanges with a June 2005 conference in Vilnius that drew nearly all of the country’s program alumni. During the event, the chair of the Lithuania Association of City Administrators spoke about how the U.S. visits provided valuable examples for improving transparency in city government, and the mayor of Panevezys related that his exchange to Tucson, Ariz., gave him many new ideas for improving investment opportunities.

Russia (1999–present) Open World’s original focus country has been sending emerging leaders to the United States since July 1999. Russia’s nearly 13,000 participants have come from all of the country’s 83 regions (in relative proportion to the populations of Russia’s seven large political entities), with heavy representation from national leaders, regional and local governments, the judiciary and legal professions, and the health, education, and social services sector. The Russia program currently operates exchanges on the themes of accountable governance, rule of law, and social issues. Congress in 2003 established a separate Open World program for Russian cultural leaders. Open World visits are designed to promote professional or community partnerships that continue beyond the actual visit.