

BUSINESS PROGRAMME FOR THE RUSSIAN INVESTMENT FORUM

Sirius Federal Territory

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Population, Health and Wellbeing

Living a Long and Happy Life

Against the backdrop of the pandemic, Russia's life expectancy fell for the first time since 2003, from 73.3 years in 2019 to 71.1 years in 2020. The indicator is expected to reach 78 by 2030, and achieving the breakthrough needed to increase life expectancy from 73 today to 78 years by 2024 is a key priority for the Russian healthcare sector. It will however require an enormous concentration of efforts from across society. What measures need to be taken today in order to reach this goal? How should the burden of responsibility for the health of the population be shared between the state, employers and citizens? What solutions need to be adopted in the healthcare system in order to meet the challenges of the day? Will digital technologies be able to help people fight for their own longevity alongside doctors?

Population, Health and Wellbeing

A Service Model for the Social Sector: The Social Treasury

The Government of the Russian Federation has approved a framework for the digital transformation of the social sector to 2025, which will streamline the IT systems of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Pension Fund of the Russian Federation, the Social Insurance Fund of the Russian Federation, and a number of institutions offering medical and social assessments. The new system will help citizens to access state services without applications or supporting documents. All processes related to the allocation and provision of state social support will be moved to the platform. Will the service model prove effective?

Population, Health and Wellbeing

Healthy Habits: From Fad to Way of Life

Health is the most important thing in life, but not everybody is able to follow a healthy lifestyle and avoid illness. Today, amidst the influence of the internet and mass participation in online life, it is more important than ever before that the health of the nation is supported and that sports and healthy lifestyles are promoted. What makes sport an important tool for personal development? Being healthy may be seen as fashionable, but how can healthy living become a natural and habitual part of life for the majority of Russia's residents?

Population, Health and Wellbeing

Demographic Policy: Responding to New Challenges

The task of preserving Russia's population is of the highest national importance. At the same time Russia, like many other countries around the world, will face further population ageing along with a decrease in birth and death rates over the coming decades. These changes will have long-term socioeconomic implications. The solution to the problem of demographic decline should take into account a whole host of factors, including strategies to strengthen social security, efforts to reduce the risk of reproductive disorders, protect the health of newborns and create an environment conducive to good health, and educational activities promoting healthy lifestyles and responsible parenting. What can Russia do to respond to these challenges? What family support measures could drive Russia's demographic development? What measures can help to reduce death rates, particularly among the male working-age population? How can the public be incentivized to lead a healthy lifestyle and take a responsible attitude towards health and parenting?

Population, Health and Wellbeing

How Can We Truly Remove Barriers in Russian Regions?

A barrier-free or universal environment means that everybody, including people with limited mobility, can make use of their immediate surroundings unassisted. This means that people have the opportunity to participate in the social, productive, cultural and sporting aspects of public life in the country, access a decent education and find skilled work, and lead a full and rich life without restrictions. Targeted efforts to create a barrier-free environment have been made in Russia for a long time. Changes are being made to federal and regional regulations, and funding is being allocated. Are these efforts sufficient? What measures need to be taken by the state and regions in order to genuinely remove barriers?

Population, Health and Wellbeing

Migration During the Coronavirus Pandemic

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting restrictions had a direct impact on migration flows in Russia. Net migration into Russia dropped sharply in 2020, while internal migration reached a nine-year low. Labour market competition has intensified in some sectors, while acute personnel shortages have been observed in sectors where foreign migrants have traditionally accounted for a large share of the workforce. How has the pandemic affected the mobility of the able-bodied and most economically active section of the population, both domestically (internal migration) and in terms of foreign workers arriving in Russia (external migration)? Which areas of economic activity have seen particularly drastic reductions in migrant worker numbers? How can the inflow of skilled labour into Russia be increased without disrupting the labour market?

Population, Health and Wellbeing

National Development: A Human Perspective

The new national development goals closely mirror the Sustainable Development Goals, including in terms of efforts to sustain population levels, protect people's health and wellbeing, ensure decent and productive work, and promote entrepreneurship. But how are they viewed by the people living in the country and what real outcomes are they expecting?

Population, Health and Wellbeing

Modern-Day Healthcare

Healthcare development has accelerated dramatically in the context of the pandemic. Beneficiaries of the industry have acknowledged the current challenges and are willing to adopt joint strategies to embark on a path to the healthcare of the future. Modern healthcare is inextricably tied to the development of digital technologies and discoveries in molecular biology and medical genetics. Today, more and more solutions are emerging each day that bring breakthrough medical achievements closer to society and individual patients. We have seen the emergence of a powerful impulse driving the development of medicine and this is taking modern healthcare to an unprecedented new level, based on the principles of a patient-focused and personalized approach, the identification and prevention of disease threats, and efforts to build a healthy society. What opportunities does the development of medical technologies and smart medicine provide for all healthcare users? What are the prospects for developing genetic and biomolecular technologies in Russia and implementing them into clinical practice? To what extent is today's regulatory framework ready for the transition of innovative medical technologies to a practical healthcare setting? What barriers to their development are still in place in the sector?

Population, Health and Wellbeing

Social Impact Investing in the Regions

In recent years, the ESG agenda has established itself as a key component in the development strategies of major businesses. It is, however, important to understand that thinking about the right systems for sustaining human life is not only the responsibility of business, as all businesses are located in particular territories and specific regions. It is crucial that dialogue is established between businesses and the regions where they are based as concerns the implementation of ESG plans. The regions shoulder an additional strategic and coordinating burden in terms of combining the ESG strategies of all companies operating on their land and creating a synergistic effect. Discussions should be held to establish how government and business should work together to develop green platforms and which tools for interaction should be developed. How are the various areas of responsibility for solving environmental problems, issues of greening and other factors in creating a comfortable and safe living environment being delegated? How can the relevant investments that companies should be obliged to make in the territories be calculated? What is social impact investing for the sustainable development of the territories? How should businesses cooperate with the regions with respect to the ESG agenda? What would a system of interaction between the regions and business that could create an effective territorial strategy for the environmental recovery of the regions look like?

Opportunities for Personal Fulfilment and Talent Development

The Workforce of the Future

Improving skills on a global scale will lead to USD 6.5 trillion in global GDP growth and create 5.3 million new jobs by 2030. Russia, like the rest of the world, has already come up against a colossal shortage of skilled professionals in every sector of the digital economy. The modern educational system is poorly equipped to meet the needs of the market and large-scale transformations are required across the innovation development pipeline. The task of preparing employees for the digital economy requires new

training technologies and a period of adaptation. The demand for highly qualified staff existed long before COVID-19, but the pandemic accelerated the implementation of digital transformation strategies and remote working for many companies and entire sectors. A lack of preparedness for the challenges of the digital economy will inevitably drive up the already high talent gap, and approaches to teaching digital skills and skills for the 21st century must be reconsidered in order to bridge it. At what age should school-age pupils be taught digital skills and skills for the 21st century? What measures are currently being taken at the regional level to systematize this process? What are the barriers and the challenges when it comes to scaling up best practices?

Opportunities for Personal Fulfilment and Talent Development

The Creative Industries at the Heart of the New Regional Economy

The creative industries are one of the core elements of sustainable economic development and the creation of human capital in the modern world. Many countries have developed and adopted programmes to support the creative industries at the state level as part of efforts to advance the innovation economy. Systemic support for the sector is also beginning to take shape in Russia. Russian regions have sufficient resources and infrastructure for the development of various sectors in the creative economy, but they have not yet managed to fully realize that potential. What measures need to be taken to support implementation? What is the Russian approach to developing the economy of the future? What new opportunities do the creative industries bring to investors?

Opportunities for Personal Fulfilment and Talent Development

Implementing an Industry-Specific Approach to Staff Training

Technologies in today's world are changing more rapidly than we can predict. It is often the case that people graduate from educational institutions with outdated knowledge and have to relearn on the job. This situation needs to be resolved in order to protect economic competitiveness. According to government plans, a sector-based approach to training staff will be introduced in Russia, with educational institutions working in close cooperation with enterprises. How will this affect the education system and the labour market? Will it help to close the gap between educational institutions and businesses? Will graduates enjoy greater competitiveness on the labour market?

Opportunities for Personal Fulfilment and Talent Development

Searching for Investment: Young People and Startup Capital

Where can tech project leaders seek funding, and why do many ideas remain on paper and in presentations? What support measures do young people need in order to start businesses and open factories, but also to bring people on board with entrepreneurial activities? What can be done to identify investor risks as well as the reasons why youth-led projects are considered 'unreliable', such as age and lack of experience? Why are young entrepreneurs rejected by investors so frequently? These are the questions that young entrepreneurs often ask themselves. The session will try to answer the questions of how to attract funding, where to apply and where to seek advice on how to 'package' ideas.

Opportunities for Personal Fulfilment and Talent Development

Engineering School for the Professions of the Future

The Government of the Russian Federation is readying a project to create 30 cutting-edge engineering schools on the campuses of existing universities and in partnership with high-tech companies. The goal of the 'Advanced Engineering Schools' federal project is to modernize engineering education and train qualified staff for the development of critical technologies and sectors of industry. The arrival of the advanced engineering schools in the regions will reduce the gap between educational programmes and employer expectations, while bringing high-level industry experts into the educational process and creating well-equipped research facilities and laboratories. The full involvement of high-tech business at all stages will contribute to the effectiveness of the 'Advanced Engineering Schools' project. What conditions need to be created to support the successful modernization of engineering education and the training of engineers for various sectors? Will graduates of the project help the Russian economy to make a significant technological breakthrough?

Opportunities for Personal Fulfilment and Talent Development

Volunteering and Helping Charitable Causes: Stronger Together

The number of volunteers in Russia has grown by an order of magnitude in recent years. Helping others is becoming an integral part of the country's life and culture. During the pandemic, the nationwide #InThisTogether mutual aid project brought together more than 250,000 volunteers and provided targeted assistance to over 6.5 million people. How can this development trend be sustained and uplifted in the regions? What is the contribution of volunteers to the national economy? What further support

could the state provide?

Opportunities for Personal Fulfilment and Talent Development

Remote Regional Employment

The expansion of remote working during the pandemic has had mixed outcomes for the labour market in the regions. On the one hand, people are now able to work without leaving the house, but the disappearance of geographical barriers to employment can lead to labour market shortages in certain regions. What positive and negative effects are employers seeing today? How can valuable staff be retained in the current conditions? How will the situation develop after the lifting of pandemic restrictions?

Opportunities for Personal Fulfilment and Talent Development

Development Institutes as Tools for Achieving National Development Goals

Development institutions in Russia are shifting their activities to focus on achieving the national development goals. This requires significant restructuring efforts and long-term planning for the new structures. Reforms to development institutions have been made with a view to optimizing their activities and improving efficiency. How will the system of development institutions function now? How are outcomes in terms of achieving the national development goals being assessed?

Comfortable and Safe Living Environments

Transforming Business with ESG

All around the world, the incorporation of ESG into business strategies is emerging as a new standard for companies and a guarantee of successful business. The pandemic has accelerated the process of transformation, with the ESG transition taking hold at the state and commercial levels. The first positive changes in terms of redirecting production towards more environmentally friendly activities are already being observed. Furthermore, some analysts believe that companies ignoring sustainable development and CSR will encounter serious difficulties over the next few years. Is there really a way out of the COVID crisis through the 'green door', which is to say through the integration of environmental and social solutions into large-scale economic recovery projects? What regulatory policies and management methods can help Russia to improve productivity and competitiveness by adopting green principles?

Comfortable and Safe Living Environments

The Low-Carbon Economy: Where Do We Go from Here?

In recent years, a wide range of countries have adopted priority initiatives to reduce their carbon footprint and are on the lookout for solutions. Russia has already taken important steps towards developing a low-carbon economy. Notably, a Presidential Decree has been adopted, stipulating the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions to 70% of 1990 levels by 2030, taking into account economic growth and an increase in the absorptive capacity of forests. Furthermore, a strategy for low-carbon development to 2050 has been approved and a key climate law on restricting greenhouse gas emissions has been signed. What are the next steps that should be taken, given the importance of achieving sustainable development in the country alongside balanced economic development? What are the prospects for developing green energy in Russia and what support measures are needed?

Comfortable and Safe Living Environments

How the Pandemic Has Affected Urban Development

Cities around the world have had to adopt various measures in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic, which has affected almost all areas of life in metropolises. At the same time, many city administrations have been able to take full advantage of the situation by rolling out transformations that aim to minimize the negative consequences of the pandemic while also laying the foundations for the future sustainable development of cities and improvements to safety and comfort for urban residents. How will Russian cities develop in the post-pandemic reality? What positive lessons have been learned from the crisis?

Comfortable and Safe Living Environments

Investing in People and Culture

A country's human capital is created through investing in upbringing, education, culture, public health, improving professional skills, standards of living and quality of life of the population, science, knowledge and entrepreneurialism. What is its impact on our lives and why is it desirable to increase it? What is the economic return on investing in people and culture?

Comfortable and Safe Living Environments

Improving Living Conditions on a Regional Level: A Human Perspective

There are various federal and regional programmes in place in Russia today to improve housing conditions. How effective are they proving to be in the regions? What needs to be done so that people can access affordable and comfortable housing?

Comfortable and Safe Living Environments

Investment in Infrastructure as a Driver of the Regional Economy

The COVID-19 pandemic has shone a light on the different levels of resilience of various urban and national economies, with some paralysed by the new threat while others have raced ahead, leaving lockdowns behind with increased investment and production. How can the economies of federal subjects be made to operate independently of external shocks, and what tools for diversifying and expanding development project portfolios have proven to be the most effective? How do large-scale infrastructure projects affect investment activity trends and how can the ratio of private and public investment be effectively managed? What tools to help the regions have been created and are they effective?

Comfortable and Safe Living Environments

How the Sharing Economy Benefits the Urban Environment

The sharing economy is based on the collective use (through rent or barter) of any resource, rather than its ownership, and can apply to anything from housing and offices to cars and parking spaces, and even knowledge and skills. According to the Russian Association for Electronic Communications (RAEC), the market volume of Russia's sharing economy exceeded RUB 769 million by the end of 2019, showing a year-on-year increase of almost 50%. Having since soared to new heights, the sharing economy is now a hot trend that is already transforming into an independent economic model and is exerting a huge influence on the urban environment and human life. The pandemic did not reverse the trend towards mindful consumption, and in fact only strengthened it, with the lockdown driving growth in temporary purchases. Furthermore, the consolidation of the habit for ordering deliveries has made it possible to expand participation in the sharing economy geographically. Initially, Russia's sharing economy developed most rapidly in the major cities, but the pandemic has jump-started the regions. Will the trend for increased sharing in the regions continue after restrictions are lifted? What positive and negative effects does the sharing economy have on the liveability of the urban environment?

Comfortable and Safe Living Environments

Breathing, Not Suffocating: Is It the Responsibility of Business to Reduce Emissions?

In Russia, thousands of citizens complain regularly about 'black sky' events. The Clean Air federal project is set to be expanded to dozens of Russian cities, but by 2024 the 12 dirtiest cities in the country will have to reduce emissions by 20%. How can this be achieved? What support measures are needed? Is business willing to invest in modernization and install monitoring devices on a voluntary basis?

Comfortable and Safe Living Environments

How Carbon Regulation Can Boost Regional Climate Projects

An experiment to create Russia's first carbon trading system is now underway in Sakhalin. The region will inventorize greenhouse gas emissions and absorption, set emission quotas and introduce extensive carbon reporting. The region should achieve carbon neutrality as early as 2025. How will the system for trading carbon units be implemented? Are the regions ready to scale up the project? How will companies reduce their carbon footprint?

Comfortable and Safe Living Environments

The National Clean-Up Effort to Improve the Environment in the Regions: Problems and Solutions

Russia has launched a 'clean up' of its land and seas. Over the coming decade, Russian regions will have to phase out hazardous industrial plants, recover sunken ships and clear away unauthorized landfill. How can we target waste 'hot spots' without creating even more waste? What can help Russian regions to complete this clean up? How can facility owners be held accountable for the environmental damage that has accumulated?

Decent, Productive Work and Successful Entrepreneurship

What Should the Regional Development Budget Look Like?

Despite the post-pandemic economic recovery, many Russian regions are struggling to draw up development budgets. At the same time, the national development goals cannot be achieved without appropriate funding. How has the pandemic changed the environment for regional development budgets? How can the space be made attractive to investors and where should alternative funding sources be sought? Can the regions move forward without development budgets? How dangerous are budgetary imbalances?

Decent, Productive Work and Successful Entrepreneurship

The Future of Venture Capital in Russia

The Russian venture market almost doubled in 2020, with the volume of public deals involving Russian startups standing at RUB 21.9 billion. Experts are forecasting further growth, with industries associated with the digitalization of offline sectors growing by tens of percent year on year, while the traditional economy is showing much more modest figures. This is therefore a favourable time for the launch of new business ideas and for established startups to hold IPOs. How can this trend be maintained in the longer term? Will the state bolster its role in this area? How can companies successfully enter the venture capital market?

Decent, Productive Work and Successful Entrepreneurship

25 Million by 2030: How Can We Grow Small Businesses?

The pandemic has had a huge impact on all areas of life. Over the last two years, small businesses have begun to operate differently. Entrepreneurial activity is becoming increasingly significant both to the economy and social development. Small and medium-sized businesses are forecast to account for 40% of Russia's GDP by the end of this decade, while the number of people employed by small businesses is expected to grow to 25 million. What measures are needed in order to achieve this? How have the key priorities of SMEs and the state changed? How can the achievement of the national goals and sustainable business development be ensured?

Decent, Productive Work and Successful Entrepreneurship

Regional Investment Standard 2.0. FAST TRACK for Investment

Today, the 24 Russian federal subjects with the highest investment attractiveness account for around 93% of all investment. It is therefore crucial that a policy is created to identify the specific factors governing the investment-led development of the regions and create the conditions for investment in the economy of the future. The Regional Investment Standard 2.0 has been developed to achieve this, taking into account the best investment practices accumulated by the Agency for Strategic Initiatives since 2012. The new regional standard is based on best practices established in cooperation between federal subjects and investors, and is compiled in such a way that all regions meet the minimum set of requirements for attracting investment. Moreover, the Fast Track investment project support system, which is being implemented in Russia's regions, has been designed to create a convenient and rapid mechanism for launching and supporting investment projects. At its core is a mechanism for identifying the shortest and most convenient customer journey from project concept to business result for every entrepreneur in every region of the country. The programme includes the creation of an investment policy statement, an investment map, a set of investment rules for Russian federal subjects, and standards to ensure the availability of infrastructure. How will the creation and implementation of a single support system for investment projects in the regions affect regional attractiveness to investors? To what extent will the new investment standards simplify project implementation and help to synchronize cooperation between government agencies and investors?

Decent, Productive Work and Successful Entrepreneurship

The Main Drivers of Gross Regional Product in Russia's Federal Entities: Investment, Infrastructure, Tax

The spread of the novel coronavirus infection has proven to be a major challenge for both the global and Russian economies. Measures adopted by the Russian government to support businesses and the public helped to mitigate economic recession and promote recovery. Now, however, the regions must look for new sources of economic growth. An effective tax policy, efforts to attract new investors, construction of new high-quality infrastructure and the ability to master new technologies can all help regions to make a forward leap in terms of economic development. What are the main growth points for GRP in the federal subjects and how can they be used effectively in the present environment? Which growth drivers could be most effective in the current situation?

Decent, Productive Work and Successful Entrepreneurship

Business and Law Enforcement Agencies: A New/Digital Format for Collaboration

The openness of law enforcement agencies to public dialogue with business is crucial in the modern world, and necessary in order to protect the trust of entrepreneurs in government bodies. Digital communication formats make it possible to practically eliminate barriers between them, and all that is needed is for both parties to come together. What measures are being taken today to establish direct contact between business and government? How are new technologies helping to raise business confidence in law enforcement agencies? Is it possible to establish dialogue on an equal footing?

Decent, Productive Work and Successful Entrepreneurship

Drivers of the Economic Model of the North Caucasian Regions

The North Caucasian Federal District is currently facing a number of economic problems. The programme for socioeconomic development implemented in the macroregion in recent years has not delivered tangible results. There are still quite a few problems that need to be addressed, including at the federal level. At the same time, it is clear that the region possesses significant potential across a whole host of areas, which is unfortunately not yet fully realized. There are huge opportunities for the development of various sectors including tourism, from health and sports-based to extreme tourism, as well as agriculture. There are encouraging conditions for launching industrial facilities, and the favourable geographic location at the crossroads of global north–south and east–west transit routes allows for development in the logistics sector.

Decent, Productive Work and Successful Entrepreneurship

Cluster Development: The Role of Cross-Industry Collaboration in Achieving Global Technological Leadership

Cluster initiatives, which are an effective tool for the creation and development of cooperative projects, are spreading rapidly across Russia's federal subjects. There are currently around 50 industrial clusters in Russia. What can be done to identify promising regional industry leaders who might be able to support them through cluster policy? How do cross-industry (intersectoral) technological processes change the structure of production facilities and increase their efficiency?

Decent, Productive Work and Successful Entrepreneurship

Russian Industry as a Driver of Regional Socioeconomic Development: Growth Centres

The demands of our time (the fourth and fifth industrial revolutions) dictate new approaches to creating and implementing industrial policy in Russia. There is a focus on investments in industrial infrastructure, the use of the most modern and advanced technologies as well as the training of a highly skilled workforce in the interests of the backbone sectors of Russian industry. In recent years, in Russia's industrially developed regions, which include the Ural Federal District, the state and business have invested a substantial amount of funds in implementing major and significant projects to spur the socioeconomic development of the regions. These projects have helped to create new highly productive jobs as well as significantly renovate the production base of organizations in the real sector of the regional economy and, in some cases, create modern accompanying social infrastructure, which is much needed at the local level and has made it possible to improve people's quality of life. In its work, the government is focused on increasing the rapid rates of industrial development in the regions, while bearing in mind its importance from a socioeconomic standpoint, and supporting employment among the population. Of course, business also plays an important role in such work by ensuring parity and making joint efforts with the state to maintain the appropriate investment activity. What level of investment is needed to support existing production and develop new technologies? Who should make this investment? Should the state support all sectors or only strategic ones? Is it worth "injecting" public money into unprofitable projects if they ensure high levels of employment? Which state support measures have worked well and what is missing?

Digital Transformation

Ethics and Trust in a Digital Environment

If the digital transformation of the state is to be implemented, it is crucial that ethical questions arising from the use of digital technologies are answered in a timely fashion. A new technology revolution is changing our lives, bringing with it new ways of doing things, new interests and new values, while attempts to combine them with existing ones are not always successful. Conflicts and new ethical problems arise. Digital trust is a new phenomenon of the digital age, and is defined as the confidence of users in the ability of digital institutions, enterprises, organizations, technologies and processes to create

a secure digital world. Is this achievable today? What are the risks of widespread digitalization to humanity? How can people protect their privacy?

Digital Transformation

How Can We Attract and Retain Tech Startups?

The development of new technologies is a key criterion in the struggle for global technology leadership, where attracting and maintaining tech startups becomes vital to the economy. The main problem for Russian technology startups is a lack of opportunity to attract external financing. What is the solution to this problem? What support measures can the state and the regions offer to tech entrepreneurs?

Digital Transformation

The Role of Russian Regions in Building a National Innovation System

Safeguarding and advancing the scientific and technological potential of the regions, which defines Russia's aggregate intellectual potential, cannot be achieved without effectively linking science and production. This link is set to arrive in the form of the National Innovation System. It consists of four blocks: science, business, human resources and digitalization. All of these elements are being developed in the regions, and it is through partnership with the regions that a synergistic effect can be achieved. What is the role of the regions in building the National Innovation System? How can synergy from interaction be maximized? What effect could this have on the national economy?

Digital Transformation

The IT Shift: Winners and Losers

The coronavirus pandemic has affected practically every economic sector, and IT is no exception. Companies in the industry were discussing the need for state support as early as spring 2020. Amendments to the Tax Code, better known as a tax shift, have been made. Income tax rates for Russian IT companies have been cut from 20% to 3%, while social security contributions have been reduced from 14% to 7.6%. The new policy applies to companies generating at least 90% of their incomes from the sale of software and IT services. The shortfall in budget revenue is expected to be recouped through VAT on the sale of exclusive rights to software and the right to use software through license agreements. The tax shift also allowed Russian IT companies to claim RUB 48 billion in additional tax deductions for nine months of 2021. Who benefits from the tax shift, and who loses out?

Digital Transformation

Digitalization and the New Social Contract

The prerequisites for a new social contract in Russia are now in place. Several initiatives have been identified under the umbrella of digital transformation, representing its digitalization. These include mobile communications and high-speed internet for every resident of Russia, digital citizen profiles providing access to a vast array of documents in a mobile application, the provision of state services and communication with government agencies online, the signing of contracts and execution of transactions in the digital space, and the availability of affordable training for IT specialists. Will the implementation of these initiatives create the conditions for mutual trust between the Russian state, business and society? Could the efficiency of government bodies be improved?

Digital Transformation

Digital Inequality: How Can We Level Up the Regions Left Behind?

An experiment was launched on 12 October 2020 to create and develop state information systems and their components and transfer them to Russia's GosTech unified digital platform. The idea of GosTech is to reuse ready-made technological and applied services, securely develop them on a ready-made production conveyor, design applied architecture based on a client-centric domain approach, and distribute ready-made regional and municipal cloud solutions through the GosMarket digital platform, which is quite apt for the roundtable 'The Digital Divide. How to Bring the Lagging Regions up to Speed'. What can GosTech offer the regions? First of all, due to the reuse of the ready-made components of the GosTech platform, the speed at which new regional digital solutions are implemented will increase, while their quality, reliability, and safety will improve. In addition, these regional solutions will become available to all regions and municipalities through the GosMarket platform. This will allow regions with small budgets to use high-quality digital products that improve people's lives without spending significant resources on their development and maintenance. The idea of such reuse is particularly important given the huge shortage of IT specialists both in the regions and in the country as a whole.

Digital Transformation

Artificial Intelligence: How Could It Be Used in the Social Sector?

Social security organizations are increasingly adopting AI technologies to enable them to expand their offer of proactive and automated services. AI is being used ever more widely in medicine and education. The application of AI in social security provision, however, is challenging. What are the specific ways in which the benefits of new technologies in the social sector can be maximized? What are the risks and how can they be avoided?

Digital Transformation

Examining the Data Economy of the Future: The Role of Regions and Cities

Is it forecast that by 2030, there will be 41 megacities in the world, home to a total of 720 million people. Over 60% of global GDP will be provided by 600 cities as soon as 2025. Three quarters of Russia's population now live in cities, which are not only the sources of economic growth, but also where cultural and tech trends are born. The introduction of innovative digital and engineering solutions in urban infrastructure will improve the efficiency of urban management and make cities more liveable, helping them to become more attractive to investors. What role will urban economies play in the national economies of the future, and to what extent will the answer depend on their technological development? Is smart infrastructure investment worth it? What solutions are being implemented in Russian cities as a priority and what projects are likely to receive state support? How should the implementation of the Smart City project be structured in the regions and what should be included in regional programmes?

Digital Transformation

Cybersecurity : Protecting Information and Personal Data in an Age of Fast-Paced Digitalization

Protecting information and personal data has long been a priority task of the state and business. 96% of Russian companies announced their readiness to review protection measures in 2021, and over half of Russia's major corporations are planning to increase their cybersecurity budgets. Data has become a kind of 'currency', with citizens unable to access a number of goods and services without handing it over. Measures taken by companies and government agencies to combat cyber threats and ensure the protection of personal data are of interest to everybody like never before. Russia is a recognized world leader in this area, but cybercriminals are also stepping up their efforts. How can cybersecurity leadership be strengthened for the benefit of companies and citizens? Are businesses and governments doing enough to protect personal data? What can be done to strengthen public trust?