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GRATA International in Legal 500 EMEA 2019

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Legal 500 has recently released its annual rankings of international law firms – Legal 500 EMEA 2019.



GRATA International made a vast improvement over its last year's results and entered the rankings across 8 jurisdictions – **Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Poland, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.**

In Kazakhstan, GRATA International has reached Tier 1 position in the following practices:

- ▶ Energy and Natural Resources
- ▶ Real estate and Construction: including projects
- ▶ Tax and Customs

In Energy and Natural Resources practice, GRATA reached the highest Tier and was commended for its full spectrum of matters, from oil&gas to mining and renewables. **Almat Daumov** and **Baizhan Bekzhanov** were acclaimed for their role in projects for Sinopec, Xingling Petroleum and Brendt. **Maxim Burak**, Energy and Natural resources partner in Astana, was praised as one of the leading Next Generation Lawyers in Kazakhstan.

Real Estate and Construction team, headed by **Yerzhan Yessimkhanov**, who was named as a Leading Individual, takes the top position in Tier 1 for the third consecutive year. Noting the team's practical responses to legal questions posed and how quickly understands what the client needs, the researchers have praised the team for its projects in real estate development and EPC contacts in petrochemical industry.

For the second year in a row, GRATA's Tax and Customs department dominated the rating with its position in Tier 1. The tax and customs lawyers were described as responsive and providing clear and complete analysis', underpinned by a deep knowledge of local legislation. **Assel Ilyassova**, head of the department, identified as a Leading Individual, was praised by clients for her 'good

and quick communication', as well as 'her ability to create a good strategy during hearings'. Counsel **Kanat Adilbekov** was named as a key figure advising on both procedural matters and litigation.

In the rest of Kazakhstan's practice areas GRATA International has secured Tier 2 positions:

- ▶ Banking, Finance and Capital Markets
- ▶ Corporate, Commercial and M&A
- ▶ Dispute Resolution
- ▶ IP and TMT

Banking and finance team, headed by **Shaimerden Chikanayev** and **Marina Kahiani**, was praised for its success in Project Finance and PPP matters.

Described by clients as 'one of the strongest' and 'among the best in Kazakhstan', GRATA's dispute resolution team was noted for its strengths in commercial and construction cases. **Bakhyt Tukulov**, head of the department, was described as a 'charismatic leader' leading a team of 'dedicated lawyers with a passion to for their work'.

The researchers have noted GRATA's IP and TMT team of for its breadth of experience in intellectual property matters, ranging from trademark and copyright registrations to copyright infringement and trademark disputes. The team, headed by **Saule Akhmetova**, also include counsel **Aizhan Mukhammad** and senior associate **Timur Berekmoinov**, both of whom are qualified patent attorneys.

GRATA's corporate team have risen to Tier 2. The department was recognised for its focus on large-scale M&A transactions and a strong record in the oil & gas industry.

In Azerbaijan, GRATA International has entered the rankings in Tier 3. The team in Baku, headed by **Ummi Jalilova**, has expanded considerably with four new arrivals and four promotions.

Kordzakhia Jgenti GP, associate office of GRATA International in Georgia, has improved their standings by reaching positions in Tier 2 for dispute resolution practice and Tier 3 for corporate, commercial and M&A. **Sofia Roinishvili**, who leads most matters, was praised for her 'deep knowledge of the peculiarities of corporate and commercial law', while her colleagues **Irakli Kordzakhia** and **David Pataraiia**, were also recommended.

In Kyrgyzstan, GRATA International dominates the country's rankings by taking Tier 1 position. The team in Bishkek, headed by **Kanat Seidaliev**, was commended for its impressive pool of international clients, which includes P&G, EBRD and Mastercard. On top of that the lawyers of GRATA in Bishkek have also prepared an assessment of the regulatory environment in Kyrgyzstan and reviewed existing capital markets laws, liaising with relevant local authorities to provide supporting documentation for regulatory reform. **Nurlan Kyshtobaev**, recognised as one of the Leading Individuals in the country, heads the banking and finance practice, with additional expertise in corporate and infrastructure-related matters. **Elvira Maratova** and **Iskender Batyrbekov** were named as Next Generation Lawyers.

In one of the most vibrant economies of Central Asia, in Uzbekistan, GRATA International has topped the country's legal rankings by taking position in Tier 1. The team in Tashkent was praised for its 'good knowledge of the law' and close collaboration with international offices. **Bakhodir Jabborov**, managing partner and director of Uzbekistan office, was described as 'exceptional negotiator' with 'outstanding experience in all spheres of law' which placed him among the Leading Individuals in the country. Other partners of Tashkent team, **Nodir Yuldashev** and **Atabek Sharipov** were highly recommended for their projects in telecoms, construction, banking and finance.

In Tajikistan, GRATA International has kept its Tier 2 positions. According to the researchers and clients, GRATA International's Dushanbe team handles matters 'according to the highest international standards, using advanced practices', and is known for its expertise in the banking and finance sector. **Kamoliddin Mukhamedov**, recognised as one of the Leading Individuals, has 'a high level of professionalism, produces high-quality work in a timely manner and meets all client requirements'.

For the first time, GSW Legal, associate office of GRATA International in Warsaw, has managed to enter the ranks of leading law firms in Poland and landed a position in Tier 5 in Commercial, corporate and M&A. GSW's managing partners **Rafał Szalc** and **Tomasz Grabarek** were noted for their 'deep knowledge' in corporate issues affecting new technology companies. Legal 500 highlighted GSW's advice to Digital Care on the establishment of a Polish subsidiary and on the drafting and negotiation of a cooperation agreement with a major Russian mobile telephone operator.

Associate offices of GRATA International in Russia have also enjoyed success by entering the ranking as leading firms in their practice area. Legal Studio secured a place Tier 3 in Commercial, corporate and M&A: St Petersburg. The team from St. Petersburg was noted for their work advising a European dairy producer on the acquisition of a domestic production company for €25m and assisting an Italian manufacturer with various corporate matters relating to its entrance into the Russian market. Key practitioners **Vladimir Komarov**, managing partner and director of the office, and **Oleg Shevtsiv**, partner, 'provide excellent support and know the commercial market very well'.

GRATA International Rostov-on-Don, was placed in Tier 2 in Transport practice and was identified as having one of the leading maritime transport practices in Russia. The team, headed by **Inna Makarova**, advises on vessel registration, ship arrest, shipping contracts and contentious issues. Among other matters, the firm assisted multiple crew members with resolving debt collection disputes with vessel owners.

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Key contacts




Nurlan Kyshtobaev

Partner

 Dushanbe, Тажикстан

 Bishkek, Киргиз

 +996 775 58 0081

 nkyshtobaev@gratanet.com



Yerzhan Yessimkhanov

Partner

 Almaty, Казакстан

 +7 775 030 0009

 yyessimkhanov@gratanet.com



Atabek Sharipov

Partner, Head of Banking & Finance Practice in Uzbekistan, Head of Turkmenistan Desk

📍 Tashkent, Узбекистан

☎ +9 9871 233 2623

☎ +9 9890 370 1847

✉ asharipov@gratanet.com



Sofia Roinishvili

Partner

📍 Tbilisi, Гүрж

☎ +995 32 292 1878

✉ sofia.roinishvili@gratanet.com



Kamoliddin Mukhamedov

Partner

📍 Dushanbe, Тажикстан

☎ +992 44 620 4163

☎ +992 93 555 8450

✉ kmukhamedov@gratanet.com



Elvira Maratova

Partner

📍 Bishkek, Киргиз

☎ +996 312 31 4050

☎ +996 770 01 7171

✉ emaratova@gratanet.com



Inna Makarova

Partner, Attorney at law, Head of Maritime and Customs Practice

📍 Rostov-on-Don, ОХУ

☎ +7 928 160 7642

✉ imakarova@gratanet.com



Irakli Kordzakhia

Managing Partner

📍 Tbilisi, Гүрж

☎ +995 32 292 18 78

✉ Irakli.Kordzakhia@gratanet.com



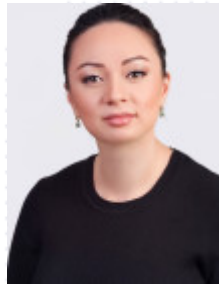
Vladimir Komarov

Managing Partner, Advocate

📍 Saint Petersburg, ОХУ

☎ +7 812 384 4838

✉ vkomarov@gratanet.com



Marina Kahiani

Partner

📍 Almaty, Казакстан

☎ +7 701 725 1269

✉ mkahiani@gratanet.com



Ummi Jalilova

Managing Partner, Director of Baku office

📍 Баку, Азербайжан

☎ +994 51 855 5145

✉ ujalilova@gratanet.com



Bakhodir Jabborov

Managing Partner

📍 Tashkent, Узбекистан

☎ +9 (9871) 230 2422

☎ +9 (9890) 970 8390




✉ bjabborov@gratanet.com

✉ tashkent@gratanet.com



Assel Ilyassova

Partner

-  Almaty, Казакстан
-  +7701763 0714
-  ailyassova@gratanet.com



Almat Daumov


Partner, Representative of GRATA
International Moscow

-  Almaty, Казакстан
-  +7775 030 00 09
-  +7701725 8769
-  adaumov@gratanet.com



Maxim Burak





Partner, Head of Subsoil Use
Department (Astana)

-  Astana, Казакстан
-  +7701786 2606
-  +77172 919 555
-  mburak@gratanet.com



Baizhan Bekzhanov





Partner

-  Almaty, Казакстан
-  +7775 030 0009
-  +7701789 9313
-  bbekzhanov@gratanet.com



Saule Akhmetova

Partner, Branch Director

-  Almaty, Казакстан
-  +7775 030 0009
-  +7701722 3280
-  sakhmetova@gratanet.com

