





## FOREWORD

At the time of publishing this Annual Report, the heavy shadow of the war in Ukraine obscures the picture of the previous year and diminishes the hardships we had to face during 2021. All the burdens of pandemic restrictions now seem somehow petty compared to the horrors and consequences of Russian aggression. Nevertheless, it was not an easy year and it tested the qualities of the Fund's team, particularly their devotion and endurance. Almost all the regular project management procedures had to be adjusted according to the extraordinary regulations, most projects had to be switched to on-line mode etc. It required great efforts and the Fund's team held up excellently, displaying great flexibility and efficiency. All these qualities will be badly needed in the forthcoming period and I remain sure the team will demonstrate them again, with attentive and smiling faces, as always.

I took over my responsibilities as Executive Director when the worst part of 2021 was over. The credit for navigating the Fund through the troubled waters of the pandemic goes to my predecessor, Amb. Edit Szilágyiné Bátorfi. She set the course and all I had to do was to continue. Thank you, Edit.

Petr Mareš  
Executive Director

**Note:** For clarity, the following abbreviations are used throughout the text: "the Fund" refers to the International Visegrad Fund; "MFAs" refers to Ministries of Foreign Affairs; "QMS" refers to the quality management system; "EaP" refers to the Eastern Partnership and "WB6" refers to the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo\*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia). The designation "Kosovo" is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence. "XK" (hereinafter indexed with a dagger†) is a temporary ISO-2 country code used by several international organizations, the European Commission and/or the Deutsche Bank. All country codes follow the ISO 3166-1 alpha-2 standard.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Every new year begins with high hopes. At the beginning of 2021, we yet again hoped for the pandemic to be over. COVID-19 has not disappeared and the words of the former Czech president Václav Havel proved right again: „Hope is a state of mind, not of a state.“

With this state of mind, the Fund team, our partners, and grantees have learned how to overcome the limitations on border crossings and physical meetings. We found our way and thanks to this, 184 projects were successfully finished in 2021, with only 53 additional project postponements. At the same time, 202 new projects were approved under our regular Visegrad, Visegrad+ and Strategic Grant schemes.

In February 2021, the prime ministers of the Visegrad Countries agreed to raise the Fund budget by 2 mil. EUR on the Visegrad Group's 30th anniversary with a focus on youth mobility within the V4. It will be our intention in the upcoming year to better promote our existing mobility schemes as a part of greater efforts to support the young generation's mobility in our region – Generation V4.

Alongside our regular activities, as presented in this report, we are particularly proud of five research projects selected under the second edition of the V4-Japan Joint Research Program. The Fund's activities in the Western Balkans and Eastern Partnership countries were reinvigorated with the pandemic's decline. The only exception is Belarus, where the political situation did not allow our partners to be directly present on the ground.

We are grateful to all our friends, partners, grantees as well as to the National Visegrad Coordinators at the Ministries of Foreign Affairs in Visegrad countries for their common effort of supporting civil society cooperation in our region. Special appreciation goes to the former Executive Director Mrs. Edit Szilágyiné Bátorfi, who finished her mandate in July 2021.

Together, we have tried to put civil initiatives at the forefront and support them. You will find a few examples in this report, joined by the faces of our team and many more.

# ALMOST €109.4 MILLION OF APPROVED FUNDING SO FAR.

## I. 2021 DATA OVERVIEW

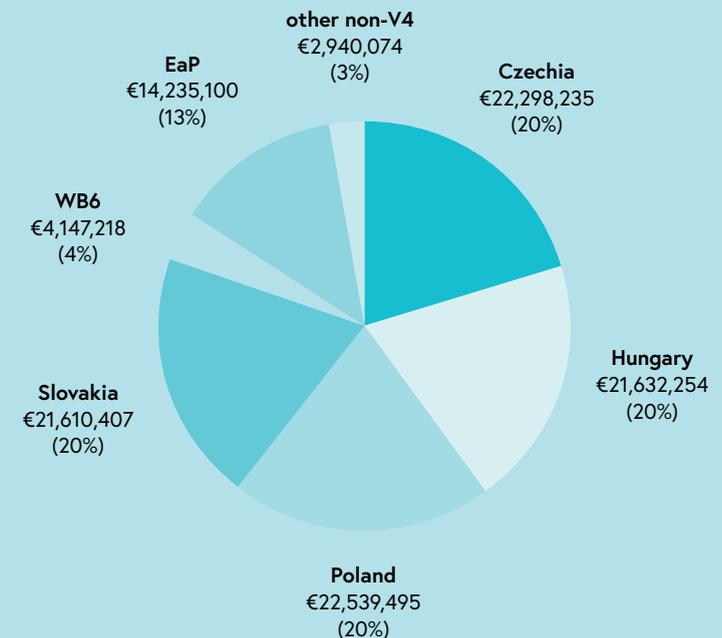
Based on the audit of the Fund's financial statements carried out on 19 July 2021 and March 21, 2022, the Fund's financial performance ended in full accordance with the Act on Accounting No. 431/2002 Coll. as amended and with the internal rules and regulations of the institution.

In 2021 the Fund operated within the scope of its annual contributions from the Visegrad Group governments amounting to €8 million. The Fund implemented all its regular programs as duly recommended by the Fund and subsequently approved by the Council of Ambassadors with the overall

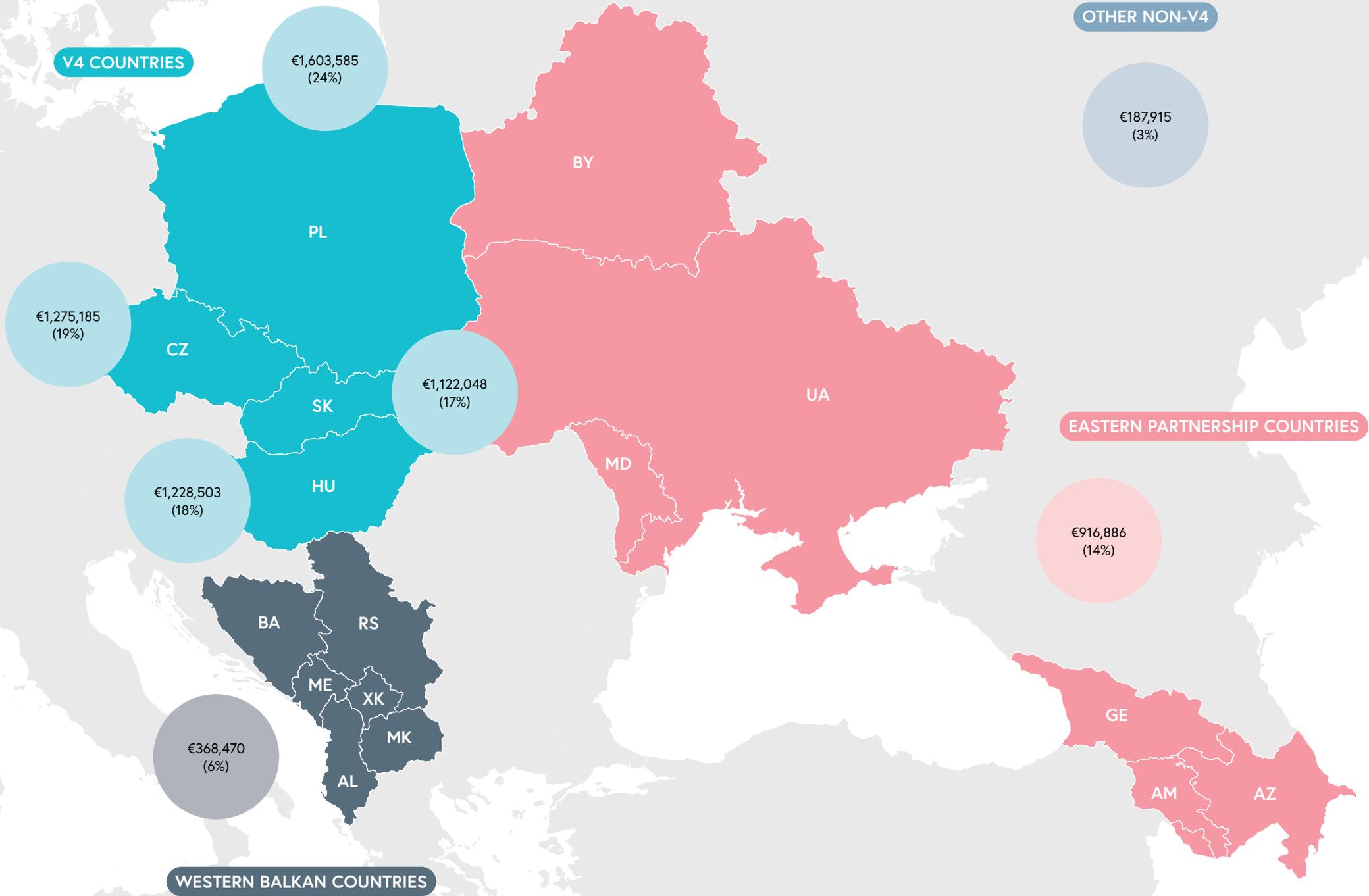
approved support at €6.65 million. This adds to the overall **almost €109.4 million of approved funding so far.**

Out of this, recipients in V4 countries utilized about 78% of the overall sum with the remaining 22% benefiting non-V4 recipients, predominantly those in the Eastern Partnership and Western Balkan countries. Council of Ambassadors sessions took place on 30 April, 31 May, 17 August, 13 December in Bratislava under the Slovak Presidency of the Fund. Their second and fourth sessions were joined with the meeting of the Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the supreme body of the Fund.

### APPROVED FUNDING BY COUNTRY/REGION 2000—2021



APPROVED FUNDING BY COUNTRY/REGION 2021





**Behind every project,  
there is an idea.  
Behind every report,  
there is a pair of hands.  
Behind every number,  
there is a human face.**

We understand this logic very well and respect the needs of our grantees, scholars and partners. For their sake we constantly try to further advance the management of projects on our side: we adopted new Guidelines for Visegrad/Visegrad+/Strategic Grants in 2021 to better regulate grantees' conduct, clarify our rules and requirements and ease their communication with us via additional digitalization of processes. Revised rules for Visegrad Artistic Residencies were approved in order to consolidate the whole program structure. The scholarship program was analysed and will be subject to changes in 2022/23. A new scheme for young people's mobility in the Visegrad region has been prepared to be presented later in 2022. The team has been providing new and potential grantees with frequent webinars, consultations and feedbacks and is ready to answer their requests promptly, as long as our rules are respected.

Marianna Neupauerová  
Deputy Executive Director

**MOBILITY AND GRANT FUNDING IN 2021**

Country/ Program	Visegrad Grants	Visegrad+ Grants	Strategic Grants	Visegrad Scholarship Program	VSP-Taiwan	Visegrad Artistic Residencies	2021 (€)	in % (2021)
CZ	978,245	23,000	67,940	123,000	13,000	70,000	1,275,185	19.03%
HU	842,859	123,100	128,794	67,500	10,000	56,250	1,228,503	18.33%
PL	848,237	212,432	132,416	335,000	14,000	61,500	1,603,585	23.92%
SK	741,016	82,782	118,000	105,000	11,000	64,250	1,122,048	16.74%
AL				5,000			5,000	0.07%
AM		90,309		25,000			115,309	1.72%
AZ	4,790	29,000		127,500			161,290	2.41%
BY				77,500			77,500	1.16%
BA		29,000		12,500			41,500	0.62%
GE		186,718		10,000			196,718	2.93%
IT	85,500						85,500	1.28%
XK†		8,470		15,000			23,470	0.35%
MK		104,462		25,000			129,462	1.93%
MD				3,000			3,000	0.04%
ME		35,780					35,780	0.53%
NL	81,760						81,760	1.22%
RS		59,358	43,900	30,000			133,258	1.99%
UA	14,909	109,160		239,000			363,069	5.42%
US	20,655						20,655	0.31%
<b>Total</b>	<b>Country 3,617,971</b>	<b>1,093,571</b>	<b>491,050</b>	<b>1,200,000</b>	<b>48,000</b>	<b>252,000</b>	<b>6,702,592</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<i>Grants total</i>							5,202,592	
<i>Total per yr.</i>							6,702,592	
<i>Total non-V4</i>							1,473,271	
<i>% non-V4</i>							21.98%	

# ALTOGETHER 202 REGULAR GRANT PROJECTS WERE APPROVED IN 2021.

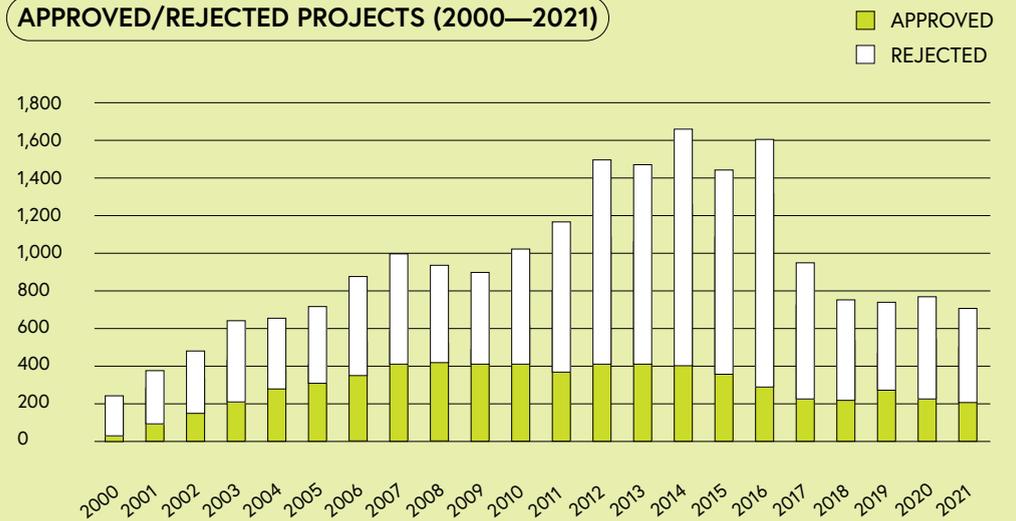
## II. GRANT SCHEME

### Visegrad Grants/Visegrad+ Grants/Strategic Grants

Deadlines: February 1, June 1, October 1

Altogether 202 regular grant projects were approved in 2021. The "success" rate between the number of submitted and approved proposals, in the end, fell well within the long-term trend giving a chance to roughly every third applicant (see below).

APPROVED/REJECTED PROJECTS (2000—2021)



SUBMITTED/APPROVED — GRANTS 2021

<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Submitted</i>	<i>Approved</i>	<i>"Success rate"</i>
February	301	75	24.92%
June	216	67	31.05%
October	181	60	33.15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>698</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>28.94%</b>

**APPROVED GRANT SUMS PER PROGRAM AND RECIPIENT COUNTRY IN 2021 (€)**

Region	Country	Visegrad Grants	Visegrad+ EaP	Visegrad+ WB6	Strategic	Total €	%	Sum €	%
V4	CZ	978,245	23,000	0	67,940	1,069,185	20.55	4,298,821	82.63
	HU	842,859	86,100	37,000	128,794	1,094,753	21.04		
	PL	848,237	106,172	106,260	132,416	1,193,085	22.93		
	SK	741,016	35,872	46,910	118,000	941,798	18.10		
non-V4	AM	0	90,309	0	0	90,309	1.74	903,771	17.37
	AZ	4,790	29,000			33,790	0.65		
	BA			29,000		29,000	0.56		
	GE	0	186,718			186,718	3.59		
	IT	85,500				85,500	1.64		
	XK			8,470		8,470	0.16		
	ME			35,780		35,780	0.69		
	MK			104,462		104,462	2.01		
	NL	81,760				81,760	1.57		
	RS			59,358	43,900	103,258	1.98		
	UA	14,909	109,160			124,069	2.38		
	US	20,655				20,655	0.40		
		<b>3,617,971</b>	<b>666,331</b>	<b>427,240</b>	<b>491,050</b>	<b>5,202,592</b>	<b>100.00</b>		

**LARGEST NON-V4 BENEFICIARIES IN 2021:**

\* 100% = €109,450,783 approved in total in 2000–2021

Country	€	% total *	% EaP/WB6
GE	186,718	3.59	46.16
UA	124,069	2.38	30.67
MK	104,462	2.01	37.18
RS	103,258	1.98	36.75
AM	90,309	1.74	22.33
ME	35,780	0.69	12.73
IT	85,500	1.64	
NL	81,760	1.57	
US	20,655	0.40	

With regards to the applicants' geographical distribution (based on their official seat), long-term trends of a relatively even distribution within the V4 region (18–23%) have been followed, with the non-V4 applicants covering slightly less than one-fifth (17%) of the total approved sum.

As far as non-V4 countries are concerned, the EaP and WB6 regions were traditionally the biggest beneficiaries by grantee seat. With 5 grant projects, Georgia surpassed Ukraine (with 6 projects) in terms of the overall approved sum. North Macedonia was the third in terms of the overall approved grant sums.

With slightly more than €5.2 million approved in grants, the average granted sum per project rose by 10% to **€26,000** (specifically €26,013 compared to the average €23,390 per project in 2020). Another trend has continued where the average grant size grew while, simultaneously, the average sizes became similar across the vehicles (i.e., grants were similar in size regardless of whether they were Visegrad, Visegrad+ Grants, or Strategic Grants). On average, a Visegrad Grant amounted to €24,282 (compared to €20,645 in 2020), an average Visegrad+ Grant amounted to €29,556 (compared to €31,298 in 2020), and a Strategic Grant to €35,075 as compared to €40,929 in 2020.

As regards the thematic focus of the supported projects, *Culture and common identity* remained the most frequent category (with one-third of all supported projects), followed by *Education and capacity building* (almost one quarter) and with *Innovation, Research and Development and Entrepreneurship* in third place:

<i>Focus area</i>	%
Culture and common identity	30
Education and capacity building	28
Innovation, R&D, entrepreneurship	12
Regional development, environment, tourism	10
Public policy and institutional partnership	7
Social development	7
Democratic values and the media	6

## EASTERN SUGAR



Katarina Figula, coordinator of the project Eastern Sugar says that "to organize an international project of this scale in the midst of pandemic was quite a challenge! Despite the pandemic, the Eastern Sugar project succeeded in putting forward five international exhibitions in five European countries and publishing a complex book in both English and Slovak languages." The Slovak National Gallery with its partners T-TUDOK Centre for Knowledge Management and Educational Research, FUTURA, Kunsthalle Bratislava and Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź examined the story of sugar factories from the viewpoint of formerly communist countries.



**I applaud all Project Coordinators who have managed to implement their project activities in any form, either on-line, hybrid or in person during yet another dire year marked by the pandemic.**

Take as an example the 15th Anniversary of Festival Error, organized by Theatre with no Home in Bratislava. Only two days before it started, the coordinator Patrik Krebs swiftly changed the program into an online space. Unfortunately, not all the supported projects have had this option and therefore decided to postpone their activities or cancel them completely. Projects under our focus area *Culture and common identity* invigorate communities and enhance artistic feelings between regions. I truly enjoy working with our partners and helping them create something special.

Martin Marciňa  
Project Manager

Apart from the regular project categories (objectives/focus areas), the following strategic priorities were implemented in 2021:

### 1. Returning to the Roots of Visegrad Cooperation

Projects emphasizing the importance of strengthening links and developing cooperation between societies of the V4 countries in the context of V4's 30th anniversary

### 2. Post-COVID Recovery

Supporting V4's resilience & recovery in terms of health, economy, and society through innovative solutions

### 3. Promoting Regional Branding and Tourism

Promoting V4's external image and tourism to and within the V4 region

## STRATEGIC GRANTS 2021

<i>ID #</i>	<i>Project title (priority #)</i>	<i>Grantee</i>	<i>Approved €</i>
22110213	Preventing post-COVID Social Exclusion Together (2)	Pedagogical University of Cracow	50,000
22110364	How to Stay Alive in V4? Phosphorus Friends Club Builds V4's Resilience (2)	Department of Geoengineering and Environmental Engineering, Division of Biogenic Raw Materials	23,395
22110366	Coordinating the V4 Strategy towards NATO - Strategic Concept and European Strategic Autonomy (1)	Casimir Pulaski Foundation	21,010
22110405	Railway Heritage for Sustainable Tourism Development – Rail-4V4+V (3)	Cultural studies platform CULTstore	43,900
22120004	Post-covid Recovery of Small Family Businesses in V4 Countries (2)	Mendel University in Brno	26,500

<i>ID #</i>	<i>Project title (priority #)</i>	<i>Grantee</i>	<i>Approved €</i>
22120032	Green Deal strategies for V4 countries: The needs and challenges to reach low-carbon industry (1)	Czech Technical University in Prague, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering	21,420
22120034	Resonances: Regional and Transregional Cultural Transfer in the Art of the 1970s (1)	Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest	31,870
22120130	Education as an effective tool for health protection and promotion within the COVID-19 pandemic (2)	St. Elisabeth University	18,000
22120162	Transgeneration transfer of holocaust trauma - prevention and care (1)	Rafael Institute	20,020
22120326	IT Fitness Test 2022 V4—Public Free On-line Test of Digital Skills for the Visegrad Group Countries (2)	Slovak National Coalition for Digital Skills and Jobs	100,000
22130004	Digital solution matchmaking platform for SMEs (2)	ICT Association of Hungary	45,460
22130024	V4DevCo - V4 Development Cooperation Trialogue: Reinforcing Synergies, Sharing Good Practices (1)	Center for Social and Economic Research	38,011
22130141	Summoning our common past - the meeting of the kings of the Visegrád countries in Kéty (1)	Municipality of Kéty	10,000
22130241	Visegrad cooperation for children: relieving post-COVID stress through tales (2)	Zsolnay Heritage Management, Ltd.	41,464
<b>Total</b>			<b>491,050</b>



## 93RD INTERNATIONAL SESSION OF THE EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT

"When we decided to organize the project, our intention was to bring together as many young people as possible and provide them with a platform to develop their soft skills, learn about political decision making and exchange views so that they can empower themselves ahead of their future professional endeavors" says Klara Birchley, left on the picture, coordinator of project '93rd International Session of the European Youth Parliament' implemented in Warsaw under the Focus area Education and capacity building. The project partnership consisted of branches of European Youth Parliaments in Czechia, Poland, Slovakia, Serbia, North Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Belarus and Ukraine.



**I am always keen to see new initiatives and approaches in education that the projects produce.**

*The Education and capacity building focus area covers projects that strengthen professional networks of educational institutions and support mobility for students, researchers, and educators to share best practices. The results we see are very inspiring. For example, the largest business competition - The High School Business Challenge, gave students the opportunity to develop their confidence and expertise and provided them with a unique chance to test themselves in this field. Developing educational methods is essential, which is why I am proud to assist our grantees with achieving such impressive results.*

Ewelina Stacherzak  
Project Manager

ALTOGETHER  
137 SCHOLARS  
WERE  
APPROVED  
FOR 300  
SEMESTERS  
IN TOTAL  
AMOUNTING  
TO €1,200,000.

### III. SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS

#### 1. Visegrad Scholarship Program

The Visegrad Scholarship Program continued to attract a record high number of proposals from the 16 eligible countries—yielding 1,096 eligible applications altogether.

When considering the approved scholars, the biggest number were the holders of Ukrainian, Polish, and Azerbaijani passports respectively (42, 24 and 15 scholars). Altogether 137 scholars were approved for 300

semesters in total amounting to €1,200,000.

The biggest interest was in Polish higher-education institutions where we approved 150 semesters of incoming scholars altogether (with Warsaw, Cracow, and Poznań among the three most frequent destinations), followed by Czechia with a total of 72 semesters (Prague, Brno, and Liberec as the most frequent destinations):

#### SCHOLARS/SEMESTERS PER CITIZENSHIP/HOST COUNTRY

CC	Scholars	Semesters	Host semesters	Total support (€)
CZ	3	6	72	123,000
HU	8	18	15	67,500
PL	24	44	150	335,000
SK	12	21	35	105,000
AM	4	10	–	25,000
AZ	15	51	–	127,500
BY	13	31	–	77,500
GE	2	4	–	10,000
MD	–	–	2	3,000
UA	42	80	26	239,000
AL	1	2	–	5,000
BA	3	5	–	12,500
XK†	2	6	–	15,000
ME	–	–	–	–
MK	3	10	–	25,000
RS	5	12	–	30,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>1,200,000</b>

<i>Field</i>	<i>Applications</i>
Engineering and technology	17.52%
Political science	14.60%
Biology	12.41%
Economics	10.22%
History	8.03%
Languages	8.03%
Computer science	4.38%
Chemistry	4.38%
Business	3.65%
Physics	2.92%
Sociology	2.92%
Earth science	2.19%
Psychology	2.19%
<i>Other</i>	4.37%

As regards the field of study, the highest interest areas for the approved scholarships were in engineering and technology, political science, biology, and economics (amounting to more than 50% of all approved scholarships), owing to the predominantly pragmatic choice of the incoming scholars from the EaP region.

# COSMIC RAY EXTREMELY DISTRIBUTED OBSERVATORY



The mission of project 'Cosmic Ray Extremely Distributed Observatory (CREDO)' was to build infrastructure that enables detecting, gathering, and analyzing large volumes of cosmic ray measurements conducted by freely participating third parties. "To fully realize CREDO's potential, we searched for new and innovative ways to attract participants and motivate citizen participation in CREDO activities, including collaboration with industrial partners," said the project's coordinator RNDr. Arman Tursunov, PhD. from Silesian University in Opava. The project was implemented under the Innovation, R&D, entrepreneurship focus area with partners from The Henryk Niewodniczański Institute of Nuclear Physics Polish Academy of Sciences, Czech Technical University in Prague, Institute of Experimental and Applied Physics, Wigner Research Centre for Physics, Cracow University of Technology, and the Faculty of Mathematics Physics and Informatics at Comenius University in Bratislava.



**2021 was another year marked with limitations on in-person gatherings, but project coordinators overcame this challenge with creative solutions.**

In the *Innovation, R&D, and Entrepreneurship* focus area, many projects implemented successful events. For instance, The Startup Hub Poland Foundation created a fully online capacity building platform for early-stage V4 start-ups, where they develop their skills, receive mentoring, and connect with potential investors. The final V4VentureDrill online video and know-how library is available for anyone interested. Many projects within this area focused on the recovery of regional economies after the pandemic. During hackathons organized in the Eastern Partnership and Western Balkan countries, talented young people proposed countless innovative solutions to pressing economic and technological issues.

Orsolya Rigó  
Project Manager

## 2. Visegrad–Taiwan Scholarship Program

Cooperation with the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) in Prague was reopened in 2021 and a call was launched with a deadline of September 30, 2021, within the renewed reciprocal fellowship program. Out of the 38 eligible applications, 9 scholars were selected, from whom 8 were eventually contracted. Due to the fact that Taiwan discontinued issuing tourist and study visas in 2021 and practically disabled

all incoming visits to the country, TECO had to facilitate individual exceptions for all program participants. To help the scholars financially manage a 2-week mandatory quarantine for every foreigner arriving in Taiwan, additional funds were dedicated to each scholar's project, amounting to one-month's stipend (€1,000); the total support within the program was thus €48,000.

<i>ID #</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>CC</i>	<i>Discipline</i>	<i>Home</i>	<i>Host</i>	<i>Support €</i>
52190003	Stefan Tkac	SK	Engineering and technology	Technical University of Košice	National Taipei University of Technology	7,000
52190010	Katarina Siposova	SK	Physics	Institute of Experimental Physics, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Košice	National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University	4,000
52190022	Kamil Orzechowski	PL	Physics	Faculty of Physics, Warsaw University of Technology	National Sun Yat-Sen University	6,000
52190039	Patryk Lichota	PL	Performing arts	Institute of Theatre and Media Art, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań	National Tsing Hua University	8,000
52190043	Jan Haviernik	CZ	Biology	Institute of Parasitology, Biology Centre, Czech Academy of Sciences, České Budějovice	National Chung Hsing University	6,000
52190044	Viola Somogyi	HU	Engineering and technology	Sustainability Solutions Research Lab, Faculty of Engineering, University of Pannonia, Veszprém	National Taiwan University	6,000
52190059	Mirjam Szakacs	HU	Political science	University of Public Service	National Taiwan Normal University	cancelled
52190066	Šárka Kučerová	CZ	Physics	Charles University, Prague	National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University	7,000
52190069	Tamás Mester	HU	Earth science	Department of Landscape Protection and Environmental Geography, University of Debrecen	National Kaohsiung University of Science and Technology	4,000

### 3. Research Grants at the Historical Archives of the EU (HAEU)

The first two deadlines of the pilot research mobility program established in 2021 with the European Union Institute in Florence took place in April and October, yielding 22 and 16 eligible proposals respectively. From those, the following seven scholars were selected to receive support for their archival research at the HAEU.

HAEU, established in 1983, preserves and makes accessible for research the archives deposited by EU institutions, facilitates research on the European Union's history, promotes public interest in European integration and enhances transparency in the functioning of EU Institutions.

<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Scholar</i>	<i>CC</i>	<i>Topic</i>
April	Kamil Glinka	PL	Urban dimension of European Community's policy – genesis and evolution
	Irma Slomczynska	PL	Parallel integration — France on the path to the European Union and the European Space Agency 1957–1975
	Jakub Szabo	SK	Political and economic development of the V4 countries since 1989, political economy of post-communist Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and political economy of the EU.
	Anna Shalamberidze	GE	Judicial Administration of Georgia in comparison with EU case-law
October	Krystof Dolezal	CZ	Recasting the Ideological Composition of Czechoslovak Christian Democracy: The European Perspective in the Late Cold War"
	Marian Sekerak	SK	Slovak contribution to Central-Eastern European federalist projects of the 20th century: A pathway of European integration?
	Aliesia Soloviova	UA	Judicial administration of Georgia in comparison with EU case-law

## LVIV MEDIA FORUM



"One of the biggest challenges in our countries is protecting the independence of media, the watchdogs of democratic development" says Nataliia Havryliv, coordinator of the project 'Strengthening professional networking for impartial journalism in the V4 region and Ukraine'. Lviv Media Forum is a tool for building contacts with outstanding journalists and experts throughout the world. They work intensively with strategies of fighting fake news and manipulation, discussing challenges and effects in the media sector of their country, create publications on national media trends and develop an international network of colleagues. The project was implemented under the Focus area Democratic Values and the Media in cooperation with The Endowment Fund for Independent Journalism, Center for Independent Journalism, the non-profit organization "Outriders" and the Slovak Security Policy Institute.



## The good news in 2021 was an upgrade in the individual mobility programs.

Firstly, together with our Taiwanese partners, we relaunched the Visegrad–Taiwan Scholarships offering postdoctoral research fellowships in Taiwan. In the first round we selected altogether 8 scientists for 2022 to work on proposals ranging from physics and engineering to performing arts. Secondly, we launched a pilot call for individual research grants at the European University Institute (EUI) in Florence, which hosts the unique Archives of the European Union. Together with the fellowships at the Open Society Archives in Budapest, these grants shall increase the quality of scholarships regarding the European Union and its institutions in the V4 region but also in the wider neighborhood.

Jiří Sýkora  
Chief of Cabinet

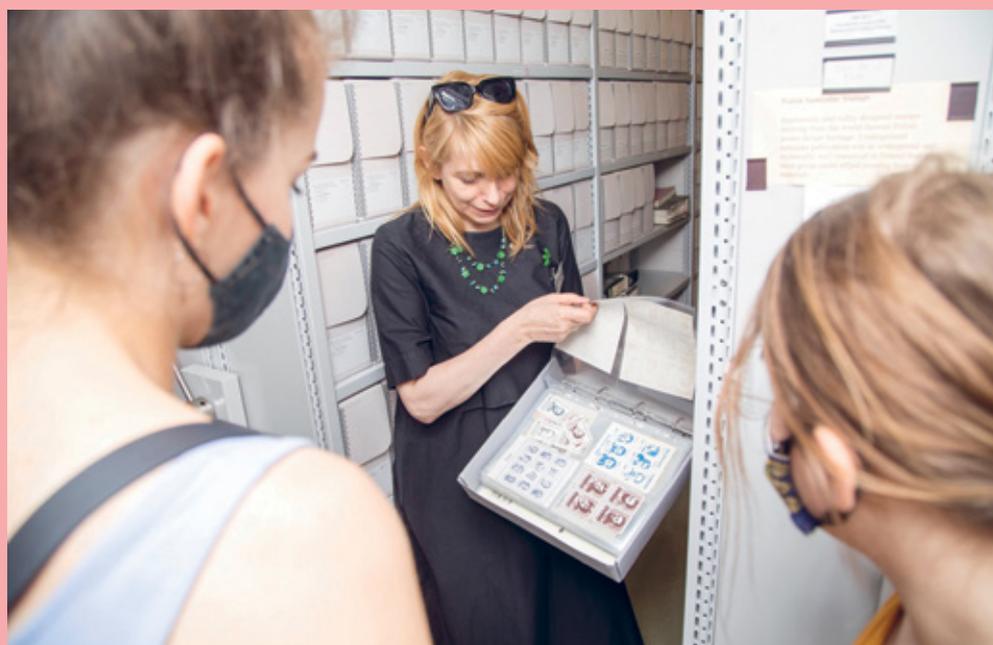
## 4. Visegrad Scholarships at Open Society Archives (OSA)

Under the theme "Possibilities of knowing: Truth seeking in a polarized world and (in) its aftermath", 19 researchers were selected altogether to conduct their research at the Vera and Donald Blinken Open Society Archives at the Central European University in Budapest. In 2021 the cooperation continued with a renewed contract that was concluded in August 2021. There were, as every year, two annual deadlines for the research fellowships—in July and November 2021.

The OSA's team has created an enabling environment, where one

can explore possibilities of creatively reusing and engaging with OSA's own collections and other connected corpora related to the Cold War and Human Rights collections.

The OSA, established in 1995, is both a repository of important collections, primarily related to the history of the Cold War and grave international human rights violations, and a laboratory of archival experiments on new ways of assessing, contextualizing, presenting, and making use of archival documents.



<i>Name</i>	<i>Citizenship</i>	<i>Research title</i>	<i>Duration</i>
Cosovchi, Augustin	AR/RO	Imagining the Third World: Non-Alignment from the Outside	2 months
Farfal, Jan	PL	Defying the Iron Curtain: Émigré journals and their attempts to confront the post-war reality	2 months
Koziura, Karolina	PL	Erasing Atrocity: Silenced Past, Reclaimed Histories, and the Cold War-era Struggles over the Great Ukrainian Famine 1932–1991	2 months
Musteata, Sergiu	MD	Communicating to Unfree Societies: Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and Soviet Moldavia	1 month
Djumataeva, Verena	KG	Turkestani Emigres' Struggle in Europe for Freedom of Thought During the Cold War (1945–1955)	6 weeks
López-Barajas, Jose Luis Aguliar	ES	The Writer who Came from the Cold. The appraisals of Aleksander Solzhenitsyn in Central-Eastern Europe during and after the Cold War	2 months
Safonova, Tatiana	RU	Turul Bird, Jurt and Kopjafa: The Revival of Turanism at the Beginning of 1990s in Hungary	2 months
Kardash, Maria	PL/UA	Dancing Behind the Curtain: Dance Politics in the Eastern Bloc Countries in the Cold War	2 months
Langstaff, Alexander	US	The Czechoslovak Institute of Public Opinion (CIPO)	2 months
Morska, Izabela	PL	The State of Plagiarism: Narratives of Autocracy	2 months
Rosiejka, Karolina	PL	Dead bodies of the enemies of the system. A necro-aesthetic analysis of Eastern European propaganda materials from the 1940s and 1950s	7 weeks
Gabbas, Marco	IT	Workers' Dissent in a Workers' Paradise?	6 weeks
Muskovics, Gyula	HU	Queer Cruising in the Kadar era in Budapest	6 weeks



**The ongoing COVID pandemic revealed to us the vast depository of misinformation campaigns and manipulation techniques that spread around Europe and caused further tensions among citizens on one hand, and between the citizens and the state on the other.**

In such an environment the Fund has pledged to put more emphasis on supporting projects that foster democratic debate, decrease tensions between ethnic and national groups, build resilience against misinformation and provide assistance to journalists. Out of the 11 projects within the *Democratic Values and the media* focus group that fulfilled these objectives, one initiative focused on a widespread problem of regional and municipal newspapers that are more vulnerable to the influence of mayors or local politicians. We are eager to read their report in a few months' time.

Dániel Péter  
Project Manager

# THE ARTIST RESIDENCIES CONTINUED TO BE THE MOST DIVERSE MOBILITY PROGRAM THE FUND OPERATES.

## IV. ARTIST RESIDENCIES

The artist residencies continued to be the most diverse mobility program the Fund operates. It performed successfully despite the limitations imposed by the various public health measures and underwent several profound changes during 2021.

### Visegrad Artist Residencies—All programs 2021

<i>Support to</i>	<i>Artists (€)</i>	<i>Hosts (€)</i>	<i>Total (€)</i>
Czechia	29,000	41,000	70,000
Hungary	30,000	26,250	56,250
Poland	32,000	29,500	61,500
Slovakia	36,500	27,750	64,250
<b>Total</b>	<b>127,500</b>	<b>124,500</b>	<b>252,000</b>

### Visegrad Artist Residency—Performing Arts

Deadline: October 15, 2021, with the planned implementation in 2022

<i>Support to</i>	<i>Artists (€)</i>	<i>Hosts (€)</i>	<i>Total (€)</i>
Czechia	5,000	9,500	14,500
Hungary	10,500	1,500	12,000
Poland	8,000	2,500	10,500
Slovakia	8,000	3,000	11,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,500</b>	<b>16,500</b>	<b>48,000</b>

Out of the 24 registered applications, 9 projects were supported. The eighth annual edition of the Performing Arts residency was implemented already outside of the former cooperation with Žilina-based Truc Sphérique. Overheads amounting to €6,000 originally

disbursed to Truc sphérique on an annual basis are planned to raise the host organizations' lump-sums by €500 (to €2,000) within the individual programs and by €1,000 (to €3,500) within group residencies.

## PERFORMING ARTS

<i>Name</i>	<i>Host Organization</i>
Sara Koluchova	Bakelit Multi Art Center (HU)
Nela Husták Kornetová	Truc sphérique (SK)
Gyula Cserepés/ Atelier 21220	Záhada – Centrum nezávislej kultúry (SK)
Gergo David Farkas	Center for Choreographic Development SE.S.TA (CZ)
Hollow	Krytyka Polityczna (PL)
Justyna Chaberek	Petrohradská Kolektiv (CZ)
Wojciech Grudziński	Zákulisí, z.s. (CZ)
Juraj Mydla	Divadlo na Cucky (DW7) (CZ)
Mgr.art. Barbora Janáková/ mimoOs, o.z.	ALT@RT, z.ú. (CZ)

## Visegrad Artist Residencies—Visual & Sound Arts

Deadline: October 15, 2021, with the planned implementation in 2022

<i>Support to</i>	<i>Artists (€)</i>	<i>Hosts (€)</i>	<i>Total (€)</i>
Czechia	9,000	13,500	22,500
Hungary	4,500	6,750	11,250
Poland	9,000	9,000	18,000
Slovakia	13,500	6,750	20,250
<b>Total</b>	<b>36,000</b>	<b>36,000</b>	<b>72,000</b>

The seventh annual edition of the Visual & Sound Arts residencies successfully supported 16 artists out of 36 registered.

Several improvements to the program were prepared in 2021 which will affect its implementation. While keeping the overall budget at the same level, the residency periods were shortened to better accommodate the artists' availabilities and needs (thus increasing

the per-month support from €750 to €1,125 for both the artist and the host institution).

At the same time, to better safeguard the money's use, the support will, in future, be disbursed in two tranches — the first one amounting to €2,025 (90%) available upon contract signature, and the second one (€225) upon the acceptance of a final report.

## VISUAL & SOUND ARTS

<i>Name</i>	<i>Host</i>
Lucie Páčová	Stowarzyszenie Teatralne Teatr Cinema
Jakub Krejčí	A4 – Associations for Contemporary Culture
Kateřina Konvalinová	Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle
Olga Krykun	Stowarzyszenie Czasu Kultury
Name of the Applicant	Host Organization
Petrányi Luca	Stowarzyszenie Teatralne Teatr Cinema
Gréta Tekla Gedeon	A4 – Associations for Contemporary Culture
Name of the Applicant	Host Organization
Maryna Sakowska	Studio PRÁM, z.s.
Paweł Kulczyński	A4 – Associations for Contemporary Culture
Jagoda Dobecka	ssesi.space, z. s.
Monika Karczmarczyk	Art Quarter Budapest
Name of the Applicant	Host Organization
Gábor Kristóf	MeetFactory, o. p. s.
Michal Mitro	Art Quarter Budapest
Adam Turzo	ssesi.space, z. s.
Robert Gábriš	tranzit.cz
Anna Čonkova	Studio ALTA/ ALT@RT z.ú.
Ján Solčáni	Art Quarter Nonprofit Kft.



**Culture and art were two of the areas most influenced by the pandemic. Our continuous support was critically important during this year since during 2020, many Artists Residencies were put on hold.**

Together with our partner institution, the International Studio & Curatorial Program, we are glad that eight talented artists could finally enrich their portfolios and work on a new interesting art installation in New York. At the same time, developments of the Artists Residencies took a new turn and we managed to unify and publish new rules for all types of our artistic programs.

Romana Mjartanová  
Project Manager



Visual Artists Valentýna Janů, Tamás Páll, Rafal Zarski and Maja Stefancikova at ISCP- the International Studio & Curatorial Program in New York.

## Visegrad Artist Residencies in New York

Deadline: April 1, 2021, implemented in November/December 2021

The International Studio & Curatorial Program (ISCP) supports the creative development of artists and curators, and promotes exchange through residencies and public programs. Housed in a former factory in Brooklyn, the ISCP is New York's most comprehensive international visual arts residency program, founded in 1994.

In 2021 the Fund implemented two rounds of New York residencies with the ISCP. Alongside the regular call, the postponed 2020 edition took place with Vojtěch Novák, Rita Süveges, Katarzyna Przewanska, and Jaroslav Kyša residing in New York in July and August. The eleventh edition of the program continued with 75 registered applicants altogether; as in the previous years, the high turnover has made this program the most attractive of all mobility and even grant vehicles operated by the Fund. The following four artists were selected and had a chance to reside in New York, namely: Valentýna Janů, Tamás Páll, Rafał Żarski, and Maja Štefančíková.

The biggest change in this chapter regards the cancellation of the cooperation with the intermediary organization (Futura Prague) and a direct relation with the International Studio & Curatorial Program in New York. This step not only makes the cooperation more direct but also brings a €1,500 cut to the overall annual budget of €41,000.

## Visegrad Literary Residencies

Deadline: December 1, 2021; planned implementation in 2022

The ninth annual edition of the literary residencies successfully approved 16 residents for the compact six-week spring edition and 16 residents for the "standard" three-month fall edition out of 115 total submitted eligible applications. Villa Decius continued to be the main program coordinator cooperating with the respective institutions in each V4 capital—the Arts Institute in Prague, Petőfi Literary Museum in Budapest, and the Literary Information Center in Bratislava. For the first time in the program's history, the fund started collecting the filtered applications submitted (whereas in the past, it was Villa Decius who took care of this).

The second change in this program relates to a €15,000 overall budget increase. The raise reflects growing prices by allocating an additional €300 and €350 to the 12-week (standard autumn) and 6-week (compact spring) editions respectively. The support hence amounts to €2,400 per artist and host in the autumn edition and €1,300 for both artist and host in the spring edition (€4,800 and €2,600 per residency project respectively).

The following people were selected for the 2022 residencies:

#### COMPACT SPRING EDITION (6 WEEKS)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Host</i>
Kateřina Bártková	Centre for Information on Literature in Bratislava
Josef Moník	Petőfi Literary Museum, Budapest
Magdaléna Sodomková	Villa Decius, Cracow
Magdaléna Rejzková	Arts Institute, Prague
Norbert Vass	Centre for Information on Literature in Bratislava
Mónika Ferencz	Arts Institute, Prague
Judit Hidas	Villa Decius, Cracow
Tímea Balogh	Petőfi Literary Museum, Budapest
Maciej Jakubowiak	Centre for Information on Literature in Bratislava
Elżbieta Łapczyńska	Arts Institute, Prague
Mikołaj Denderski	Petőfi Literary Museum, Budapest
Martyna Grzywacz	Villa Decius, Cracow
Ria Gehrerová	Arts Institute, Prague
Ildikó Hizsnyaiová	Petőfi Literary Museum, Budapest
Eva Maliti	Villa Decius, Cracow
Oľga Glušťíková	Centre for Information on Literature in Bratislava

#### AUTUMN EDITION (3 MONTHS)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Host</i>
Petr Tureček	Centre for Information on Literature in Bratislava
Matěj Hořava	Petőfi Literary Museum, Budapest
Jan Folvarčný	Villa Decius, Cracow
Šimon Leitgeb	Arts Institute, Prague
Júlia Kustos	Centre for Information on Literature in Bratislava
Dávid Szollát	Villa Decius, Cracow
Ádám Vajna	Arts Institute, Prague
Imola Borcsa	Petőfi Literary Museum, Budapest
Urszula Zajączkowska	Arts Institute, Prague
Natalia Suszczyńska	Centre for Information on Literature in Bratislava
Miłosz Waligórski	Petőfi Literary Museum, Budapest
Joanna Ostrowska	Villa Decius, Cracow
Marcel Lacko	Arts Institute, Prague
Katarína Džunková	Petőfi Literary Museum, Budapest
Tomáš Hučko	Villa Decius, Cracow
Katarína Krišťúfková	Centre for Information on Literature in Bratislava

## V. OTHER PROJECTS

### Visegrad Strategic Conferences

The budget of the Strategic Conferences program continued with its €500,000 annual allocation in 2021 but, like other projects, had to deal with limitations imposed on public gatherings:

<i>ID code</i>	<i>Grantee</i>	<i>Project title</i>	<i>Budget (€)</i>
VSC21CZ1	EUROPEUM	Prague European Summit 2021	70,000
VSC21CZ2	Forum 2000 Foundation	25th Forum 2000 Conference	30,000
VSC21CZ3	EUROPEUM		25,000
<b><i>CZ Subtotal</i></b>			<b>125,000</b>
BDPST21	Antall József Knowledge Centre	think.BDPST 2021—Connect to the Future	100,000
<b><i>HU Subtotal</i></b>			<b>100,000</b>
VSC21SK1	Globsec	GLOBSEC 2021 Bratislava Forum	95,000
VSC21SK2	Slovak Foreign Policy Association	Central European Energy Conference 2019	30,000
<b><i>SK Subtotal</i></b>			<b>125,000</b>
<b><i>Total</i></b>			<b>350,000</b>



**In 2021, the cooperation of relevant experts with decision-makers towards policy change and good governance embraced various challenges.**

Under the *Public Policy and Institutional Partnerships* focus area, a book on new urban policy administrative system in the V4 and Ukraine was published as a result of long-term cooperation of various regional stakeholders. Through imaginative exploring, one project looked into the near and midterm future and analyzed the past and present developments in the Visegrad region under the title *Our.Future: Visegrad 2025*. For the future of our projects, I anticipate strong connections of expert communities finding joint solutions to common policy challenges.

Karolina Janik  
Project Manager

## Think Visegrad Think-Tank Network

The V4 Think Tank Platform is a network for structured dialogue on issues of strategic regional importance. The core members of Think Visegrad: Center for Euro-Atlantic Integration and Democracy, the Centre for Eastern Studies, EUROPEUM – Institute for European Policy, the Globsec Policy Institute, the Institute for Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Institute of International Relations, the Polish Institute of International Affairs, the Research Center of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association.

The Think Visegrad think-tank platform concluded its tenth year of successful operations in February 2022 even though the pandemic has remained a challenge. Despite some negative effects on the issuance of assigning both short- and long-term analyses, the platform prepared three short-term analyses (on Afghanistan, Belarus, and the Western Balkans) and three long-term studies on V4 future cooperation, US–China relations and climate issues. All analyses developed by Think Visegrad experts continued to be available exclusively for the MFAs of Visegrad countries. The *equal rights, equal contributions* principle was demonstrated by the balanced nomination by core member think tanks of authors of both short- and long-term analyses, while the Visegrad spirit of cooperation was maintained through regularly engaging authors from all V4 countries in the development process.

The core network of think tanks has remained stable, containing eight think tanks, two per each V4 country and open to cooperation with think tanks and experts from outside the network. The platform successfully organized the V4 Presidency **Mid-Term Review**

**Conference in Cieszyn, Poland;** continued to increase the visibility of the Think Visegrad platform in Brussels; and hosted six **visiting fellows** from non-V4 countries.

Under the Civil Servants Mobility Program, long-term travel restrictions allowed the Think Visegrad members to proceed with study trips for civil servants from Ukraine (9), Kosovo (10) and Georgia (16) only to a limited extent (originally this was a postponed 2020 edition). The re-introduction of the COVID-19 restrictions resulted in postponing the visits of 2 Kosovar delegations to Poland and Czechia and 2 Ukrainian delegations to Hungary and Czechia.

## Think Visegrad in Brussels

Think Visegrad in Brussels strengthens the voice and visibility of the Visegrad Group countries in Brussels, raises awareness of think tanks from the Visegrad Group countries cooperating within the Think Visegrad platform. The project has been implemented by the Brussels office of EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy since 2016. EUROPEUM's Brussels office continued to enjoy the full support of the Think Visegrad platform and served as its hub also during 2021. Most planned activities were implemented according to the plan except for two study visits to Brussels (fellows from GLOBSEC and the Slovak Foreign Policy Association had their stays postponed to the end of May 2022) and a roundtable planned to be held in partnership with the Slovenian permanent representation at the European Union (postponed to April 2022—concrete dates are yet to be announced). Think Visegrad in Brussels has continued to issue their newsletter, with a monthly frequency as of March 2021.

# TACKLING CORRUPTION



Transparent and efficient public procurement (PP) enables provision of proper services for citizens and the best value for money for the state without engaging in corruption. "Our goal was to increase efficiency and decrease corruption risks in PP in partner countries, and as a result in the region through civil society engagement and implementing the best tools for PP. To establish a high standard in PP in the V4 countries and Ukraine, we cooperated and shared new approaches for mitigating corruption risks and increasing efficiency," says Anastasiya Kozlovtseva from Transparency International Ukraine—a lead organization in the project 'Tackling corruption in public procurement in Ukraine and V4 countries with new approaches' implemented under the Public Policy and Institutional Partnership focus area. The project partnership consisted of K-Monitor, ePanstwo Foundation and ECONLAB z.s.



**Within the *Regional Development, Environment and Tourism* focus area, we seek new solutions and activities to fight against climate change and to promote developments in sustainable tourism, urban planning and infrastructure.**

Let me first take you to mountains in Ukraine, where practical trainings for rescuers and volunteers took place for the second time in 2021. Meanwhile, in Albania, a project focusing on adapting natural construction of buildings created new infrastructure developments. Or Kosovo where a similar project on raising awareness and accountability of sustainable buildings took place. Both projects looked for solutions on how to deal with building safety after the 2019 earthquake in the Western Balkan region. At the same time, I am very pleased for every initiative that boosts regional tourism in a sustainable way.

Kateřina Šrámková  
Project Manager

## V4 Energy Think Tank Platform

With the aim of strengthening cooperation among the think tanks of the Visegrad countries in the field of energy, as well as promoting dialogue between the academic sector and decision-makers in this area, REKK (HU) as coordinator, along with SFPA (SK), the Instytut Jagielloński (PL) and AMO (CZ) as partners, have initiated the launch of the V4 Energy Think Tank Platform (V4ETTP) as a permanent think tank cooperation platform focusing on energy, operating from 2018.

The fifth edition of the project faced the same challenges as every other similar initiative and had to move most of its events on-line; also, due to the restrictions, its implementation had to be postponed until April 30, 2022.

## V4 Startup Force

Design Terminál, Kft. continued with the V4 Startup Force project under a new group of partners—DEX (CZ), ReaktorX (PL) and Campus (SK). The budgeted sum of €146,852.00 was fully utilized despite most of its activities having to be moved on-line. The purpose of the V4 Startup Force project is to strengthen

networking capacities among startups and incubators in the V4 region and to support their capacities in terms of their further growth. In practical terms, a scouting phase was followed by an intensive, 5-day-long virtual training bootcamp filled with workshops and business meetings for a maximum of 20 selected startups (5 per country). During the boot-camp, startups had business and investor meetings to validate their ideas and pitching sessions on a demo day. Based on their overall performance, 4 teams were selected to participate in the 2-week V4 Startup Force program and could benefit from meetings with businesses and coaches.

## Visegrad Bicycle Races

Already the ninth set of bicycle races organized under the single banner of the Visegrad Bicycle Race took place in 2021. Following 2020—which was the first incidence in the history of the project when not all four races took place—two contracts had to be amended and the implementation pushed back to October 31, 2021, and the only race which took place was that organized by the Slovak Cycling Federation.

Grantee	Awarded sum (€)	Note
Czech Cycling Federation, Prague	–	Transfer of the 2020 grant (VBR204200 for use in the 2021 edition)
Movement Health Recreation Sport Club, Budaörs	30,000	
Dolnośląski Związek Kolarski, Wrocław	10,000	Total budget of the race was €30,000 with €20,000 used from a 2020 reserve (VBR2048)
Slovak Cycling Federation, Bratislava	20,000	Concluded
<b>Total</b>	<b>60,000</b>	

# CARPATHIAN AND CAUCASIAN YOUTH INITIATIVES



Youth are effective change-makers if given proper rights to participate. The processes of engagement and meaningful talks equip them with better problem-solving abilities to eventually help them become effective leaders. The project 'Carpathian and Caucasian Youth Initiatives' by Legend Foto increased the skills and competence of young leaders in sustainable and climate change adaptation initiatives in Ukraine and Georgia. The project was implemented under the Regional Development, Environment and Tourism focus area in collaboration with the SPLAV Association, the Vision Association, the Georgian Association of Educational Initiatives, the FORZA Agency for sustainable development of the Carpathian Region nonprofit organization and The Polish Ecological Club in Gliwice.



**After we introduced the Green Recommendations for Applicants and Grantees at the end of May 2021, I immediately wished to work further on sustainability.**

Ever since, we have been preparing articles containing practical tips for our grantees on how to make their projects and environment greener. The articles cover the following topics: paper and printing in offices, waste management, green transport, food, waste management, PR and cleaning tips and we are still working towards a more sustainable Visegrad region.

Barbora Ščepánková  
Project Manager

## Visegrad Group (V4)–Japan Joint Research Program on Advanced Materials

After several rounds of discussions on the level of ministries/governmental agencies responsible for research and development of the Visegrad Group countries and Japan, a final call for proposals was launched with a deadline of April 9, 2021 for multilateral projects in regarding materials for extreme environments, materials for electronics and energy harvesting, and materials for laser technologies.

The fund's contribution, intended as an on-top funding, was eventually evaluated towards the following 5 projects to be implemented by science academy institutes/universities in the V4 region. The total 3-year support by the fund amounts to nearly €240,000:

ID code	Grantee	Seat	Total support (€)
JP1648	Institute of Fundamental Technological Research, Polish Academy of Science	Warsaw	49,448
JP22420	University of Chemistry and Technology, Prague	Prague	19,550
JP29420	J. Heyrovský Institute of Physical Chemistry	Prague	39,100
JP3936	Eötvös Loránd University/Institute of Physics	Budapest	59,160
JP39421	Institute of Materials Research of the Slovak Academy of Sciences	Košice	72,720
			<b>239,978</b>

## V4 innovators in Israel Training Program

Due to the travel restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the second part of the pilot training did not take place in 2021. Despite the fact all partners did their best to launch another call for proposals, travel was not possible throughout 2020 or 2021. As an alternative, the Israeli partner offered a series of on-line virtual lectures which took place in January 2022. The new deadline was planned in April 2022 with the implementation scheduled for September 2022.

## Western Balkans Fund

Cooperation with the Western Balkans Fund (WBF) continued its 5th year of operations. In July 2021 the third memorandum of understanding was signed in Rogalin, Poland, confirming continuous technical assistance to the Western Balkans Fund in the amount of €40,000 for the period 2022–2023. The memorandum goes beyond the usual wording and extends the cooperation towards possible experience-sharing as regards some existing Visegrad schemes, such as the V4 Start-up Force project or the Think Visegrad platform.

At the end of 2021, implementing the second memorandum of understanding between the Fund and the WBF was finished. The main objective was to assist in the sustainable functioning of the WBF's Secretariat, promoting the possibilities offered by the WBF in the Western Balkans region, and consolidating the WBF as a solid regional institution. Activities were adjusted to the pandemic situation and refocused on increasing the capacities of the WBF's team, digitization, and better technical equipment of the WBF.



The Fund's Executive Director Petr Mareš with the Executive Director of the WBF Gjergj Murra at a meeting in Tirana in October 2021.

## ESCAPE TO DIVERSITY

"The main issue that we wanted to focus on is the low level of knowledge and acceptance of different cultures and nationalities in our countries. Recent events in our countries and generally in Eastern Europe showed that there is a rise of intolerance, xenophobia and racism," says Emir Shevkiiev from Ukrainian NGO "Logos znannya". Together with their partners Logos Poland, Long-Term Planning, European Youth Centre Břeclav and Youthfully Yours SK, a set of training courses and a manual on how to build escape rooms for educational purposes were created. 25 young students actively participated in this project, which was implemented under the Social development focus area.





## Projects focusing on Social Development have become even more important in the last year during which inclusion efforts took on a new dimension.

I am very glad for the initiatives implemented in 2021 by our brave grantees targeting, among others, the elderly, children, people with disabilities, the homeless, and minorities. As a great example it is worth recalling is the project of the Center for Support and Inclusion Help Net focused on strengthening intergenerational solidarity in the V4 and Western Balkans. This topic encompasses emotional closeness, but also care and nursing. However, first and foremost, the participation of all generations in society. I consider projects within the *Social Development* focus area to be of particular importance as they contribute to removal of barriers so that all citizens can journey toward their dreams with confidence and dignity.

Anna Adamczyk  
Project Manager

THE YEAR 2021  
WAS MARKED  
BY VARIOUS  
EVENTS AND  
OCCASIONS  
BRINGING  
FORWARD THE  
ESSENCE OF  
THE FUND'S  
ACTIVITIES.

## VI. PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

The year 2021 was marked by various events and occasions bringing forward the essence of the Fund's activities. Early into the year, we celebrated the Visegrad Group's 30th anniversary in a small circle of the team, as the pandemic situation did not allow otherwise. It was later in June when the public celebration of this milestone took place in Hviezdoslavovo square in Bratislava, where we handed over the Visegrad Prize to 2020 laureate, the Boiler organization. Moreover, we held a debate on 'Civil Society during the Pandemic' at the Globsec 2021 Bratislava Forum, opened the Visegrad 4 Bicycle Race in Budapest and bid farewell to Amb. Edit Szilágyiné Bátorfi, Executive Director in 2000–2001 and welcomed our new Director, Amb. Petr Mareš.

Our newly-added sequel *Meet us in* aroused great interest among citizens. Over the summer period, Project Managers travelled to various cities within the V4 countries and beyond, where

they met with potential grantees and discussed the Fund's activities. General public meetings took place in Wrocław, Cracow, Sarajevo, Košice, Lublin, Prague and Chişinău.

Moreover, we have been to several events organized as a part of projects supported by the Fund, such as Forum 2000, Cross-Border Cooperation Congress 2021, Western Balkans Fund meeting in Tirana or the Conference Future of Europe in Brussels.

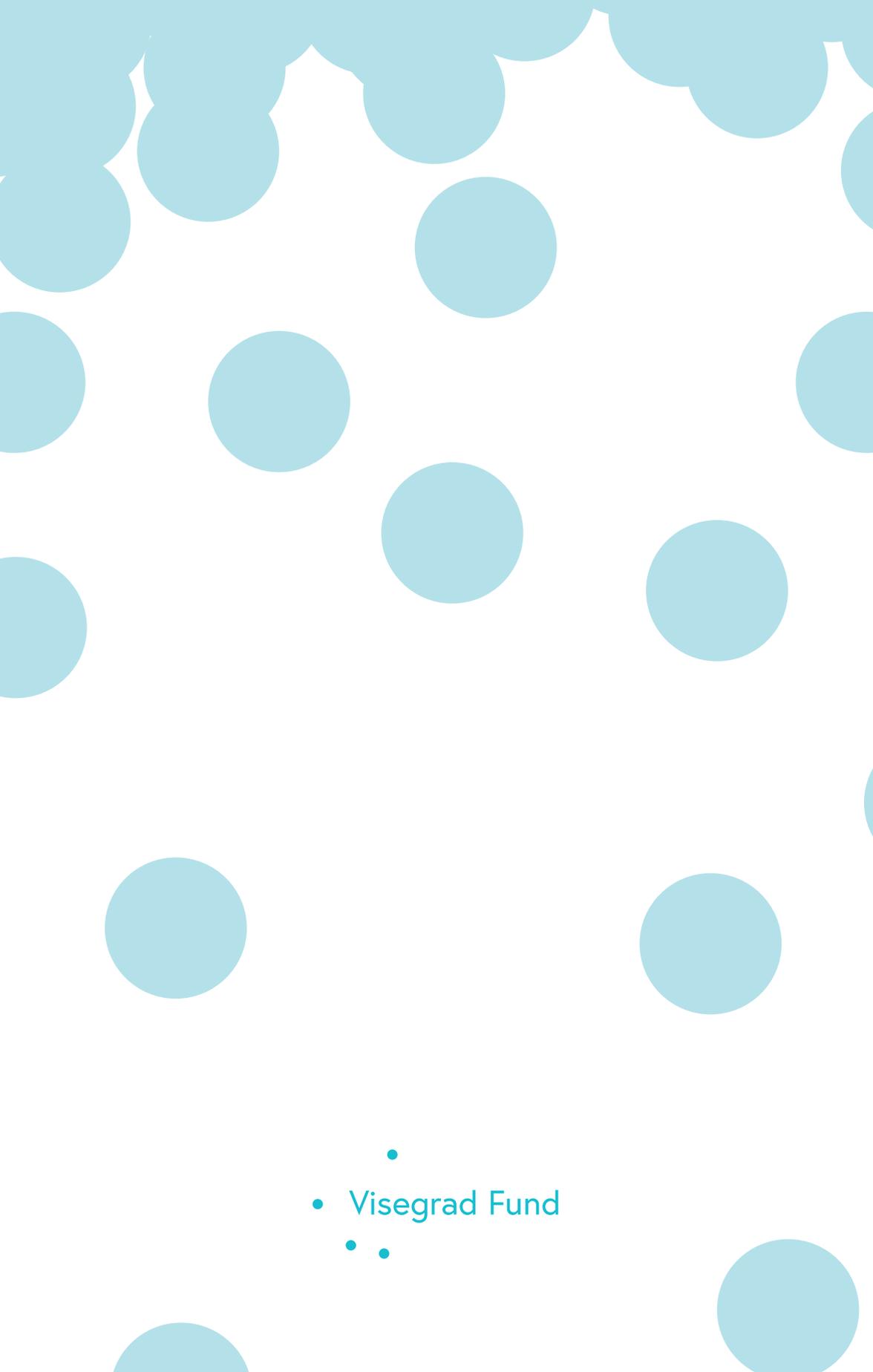
We have published several videos as a new tool for sharing the news with our followers. For example, the summer Photo competition of 2020 was renewed into a video of the Visegrad region. A video showcasing the Visegrad Prize was created in cooperation with the V4 Ministries of Culture. The most popular were videos popularizing Artists Residencies by Onomatopoe studio and the video with V4 writers talking about their experiences during the Visegrad Literary Residencies.



**The Fund's social media platforms have recorded an increase of interest in our activities. Over the year, we have reached more than 400,000 people on our Facebook and Instagram fanpages with almost 26,000 followers.**

Moreover, our regular Newsletter reaches more than 3,500 people from beyond the Visegrad countries. Maintaining close communication builds the meaningful cooperation we aim to have with all our partners. It is equally important for us to attract new people into our Visegrad family and enlarge the network of enthusiasts from various fields. I believe that with new ideas and approaches in communication during 2021, we accomplished great things.

Lucia Becová  
PR Manager

The background of the page is a light teal color with a pattern of larger teal circles of varying sizes scattered across it. At the top, there is a decorative border consisting of a row of overlapping teal circles.

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• Visegrad Fund  
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