



# VISEGRAD YOUTH FORUM 2018



## Dynamic Visegrad for Europe: The priorities of the SK V4 PRES 18-19

The cycle of side events preceding the final Visegrad Youth 2018 conference continued, as the Euro-Atlantic Center organized a roundtable discussion in partnership with the Corvinus Society for Foreign Affairs and Culture titled “Dynamic Visegrad for Europe: The priorities of the SK V4 PRES 18-19” at the Corvinus University of Budapest on the November 8, 2018. Speaking at the event were **András Máté Lázár**, *National Visegrad Coordinator, Head of Unit for Regional Cooperation at the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade*, **Dániel Bartha**, *Executive Director at the Centre for Euro-Atlantic Integration and Democracy* and **Marian Varga**, *First Secretary at the Embassy of Slovakia to Hungary*. Moderating the discussion was **Peter Stepper**, *Research Fellow at the Antall József Knowledge Centre*.

After a short introductory speech, the priorities and main achievements of the previous Hungarian V4 presidency were presented in the first part of the lecture. Speakers mentioned some of its biggest successes and also parts, where they potentially saw room for improvement, or more precisely, highlighted the areas, on which Slovakia should focus more in-depth during its presidency.

The main topic of the event was the Slovak presidency of the V4 and its biggest challenges. The speakers discussed not only the contemporary state of the Visegrad region and its stance towards the structures and organizations, such as European Union and NATO, but also the future political direction of the V4. According to the presented opinions of the speakers, the countries of the Visegrad region should focus more on the areas of defense and energy security, as those are the key fields with the most potential for deepening mutual Visegrad cooperation. After the remarks made by the speakers on the said topics, the discussion concluded with several points of view reflecting on both the short and long-term challenges of the V4, tangentially examining the future prospects of the TSI regarding the role and position of the V4 countries within the European Union.

As for the question of the position of V4 member countries within the structures of European Union, the panelists underlined the point that the more V4 countries are united in their political opinions, the more damage it seems to be inflicting in Brussels. This posed a question – what can the countries, and





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especially Slovakia during its V4 presidency, do to reverse this process? Another topic which the invited guests tackled was the proposed concept of the V4+ cooperation, via which our cooperation with Austria and Slovenia would be strengthened. One of the participants of the discussion put forward a question what the prospect of potential future expansion of the V4 format by the above-mentioned countries is. While the speakers stated that they support the idea of fostering mutual rapports within the V4+ concept, they were skeptical about expanding V4 structures by third-party states, mainly because of the historical elements and bonds between Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Poland.

Last but not least, questions asked during the Q&A section focused on the 2+2 format (Hungary - Poland & Slovakia – the Czech Republic) within the Visegrad Group as well as on development, digital technology and economic cooperation between the member states.

