



WISEGRAD YOUTH FORUM 2022



V4 and New Perspectives of Cooperation in the CEE Region

On the first of December, a workshop was held as part of the Visegrad Youth Forum 2022. The topic of the workshop was "V4 and New Perspectives of Cooperation in the CEE Region." The speaker opened the workshop with an introduction speech in which he was talking about the current challenges of V4, how V4 was dealing with the Coronavirus outbreak, how member states were cooperating, and that there is room for improvement.

Then he opened a discussion which took its place for the whole workshop, thanks for cooperating participants. The discussion started with the experiences and opinions of students with V4. Students mostly agreed on their opinion, that better infrastructure for V4 cooperation is lacking. As an example, they used their own experience with traveling to Banská Bystrica and how complicated it was to get there from their countries. Students expressed their opinions on the rights of LGBT people in V4, mostly about marriages. There was also an idea about more participation in improving V4, by giving chances for young people to have jobs in an area of V4 cooperation through think tanks, or other non-governmental organizations. Another question was: How can we improve the position in Brussels? In their opinion, it can be possible by creating think tanks in Brussels as Hungary started doing. They also advised, that currencies are also a problem, that maybe if the whole V4 had Euro as a currency, maybe the whole cooperation and funding would be more simple.

To sum up the first part of the workshop: The participants think that V4 has its own potential to develop itself, but for that, it is necessary to reach some similarity among member states and to evolve mutual functioning, for example by improving infrastructure. This could help youth to work on improving V4 also in other member states, than their own one. Also, it would be much simpler for them to meet people with the same just interests in person, not only on the internet. Another key point of discussion was the spread of soft power in the form of think tanks and, last but not least, currencies.





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After a coffee break, the second part of the workshop started. Participants had to think about solutions during the break. They started chronologically with infrastructure, as they did during the first part of the workshop. So participants started from the source of the problem, which was to fix infrastructure on a national level, then moved on to trying to efficiently connect capital cities in V4. They agreed, that for connecting infrastructures there would be needed governmental cooperation on the level of ministries of transport. V4 has also a joint statement where it advises about building transnational transport infrastructure.

Another idea for how to improve V4 was to solve the problem of small influence on a global level through effective advertisement of V4. For the sake of V4 cooperation, there should also be work on creating a clear and understandable website where you can easily reach information about V4 and its work. In this sector, social networks are essential, where we lack pages only about V4. Not only that but also building those think tanks would also really help to spread soft powers. Here are meeting national interests with interests of V4. They don't have to necessarily exclude each other; they could be worked on in parallel. Participants also had an idea of the scientific cooperation of V4. Putting V4 in elementary and middle school books would also be a big improvement because that is one more reason why not many people know what V4 actually is, and if someone doesn't even know that, then this person can't understand the agenda of V4.

That could be one reason why so many young people from V4 don't even have an interest in it, which can lead to a loss of trust in governments and political institutions. The last topic was military cooperation. The borders are directly connected to this topic. In the current situation, mainly the eastern borders On the Polish border were this year a huge humanitarian disaster, when via Belarus a lot of refugees were transported to the Polish border and this problem was dealt with only by their government without the help of Frontex, so we can see the numbers of the Polish army and how much they are putting to defense. Maybe we all should establish one common budget for V4 because it is in fact the safety of us all.





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The next thing that can improve military cooperation in V4 can be mutual exercises. That is sufficient, in the opinion of participants, because every member state of V4 is also a member of NATO.

To sum up: These young people, the participants, are really open to the evolution of V4 cooperation. They see some links to it and understand what can be improved. This discussion fulfilled its nature because the speaker was there only to handle the workshop, and almost all the time the participants were the ones who were discussing. In the end, every participant was satisfied with the workshop.

