

The background of the entire page is a solid blue color. It is decorated with numerous dark teal circles of varying sizes. Some circles are large and positioned in the upper half, while others are smaller and more densely packed in the lower half, creating a pattern that resembles a crowd or a field of bubbles.

INTERNATIONAL  
VISEGRAD  
FUND

2022  
ANNUAL  
REPORT

# FOREWORD



Entering 2022, the International Visegrad Fund team was engaged in intensive discussions about changes in and improvements of our programs and at the same time looking forward to the first peaceful post-COVID year when we could reestablish direct contacts with our grantees, scholars, and artists.

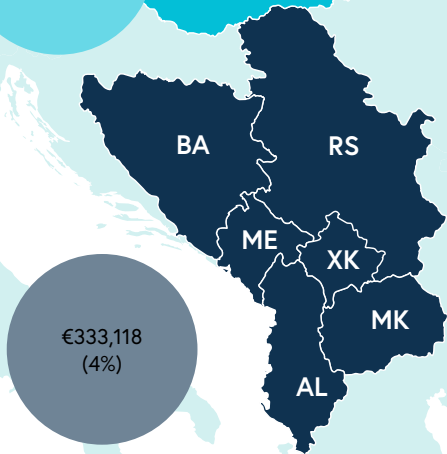
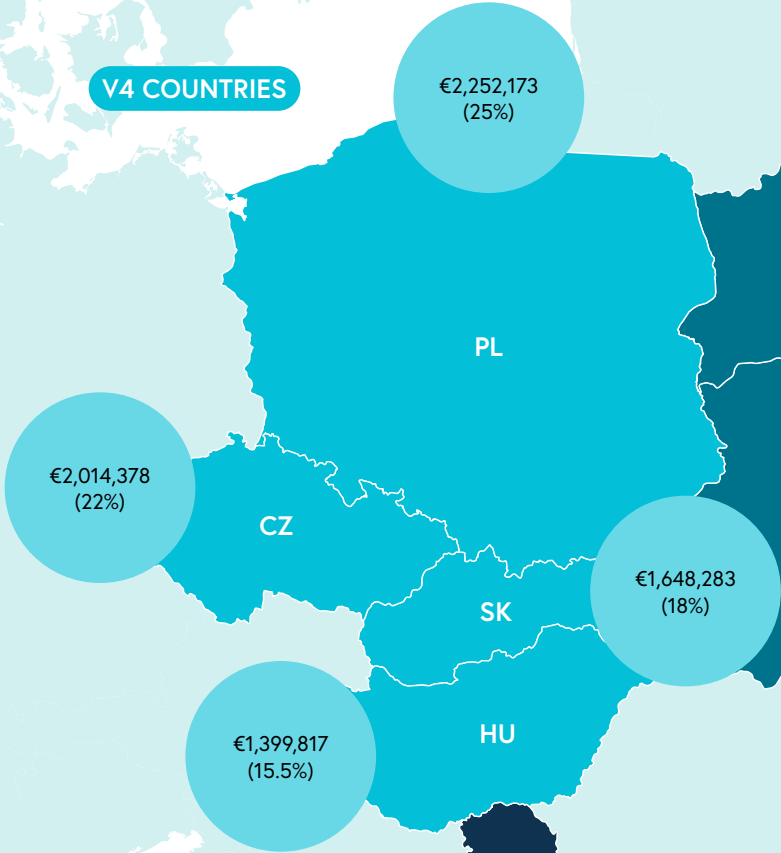
February 24, 2022, crushed these optimistic expectations. The new Russian aggression against Ukraine impacted the functioning of the Fund like nothing else in its 22-year history. Our first response to the crisis was an extraordinary call for proposals to provide assistance to refugees seeking help in the V4 region. We processed more than 200 proposals and supported 72 grants amounting to nearly €1 million. It was a very quick reaction for which I am deeply grateful both to the team for their devotion and creativity, and to the four foreign ministries who granted us a great deal of autonomy and support.

The Russian war in Ukraine obviously framed our activities throughout the year. Many grant projects involving Ukraine had to be adjusted or prolonged, the deadline for scholarships postponed and Ukrainian applicants for scholarships were prioritized. Also, the number of submitted proposals dealing with the impact of the war changed the general character of our activities.

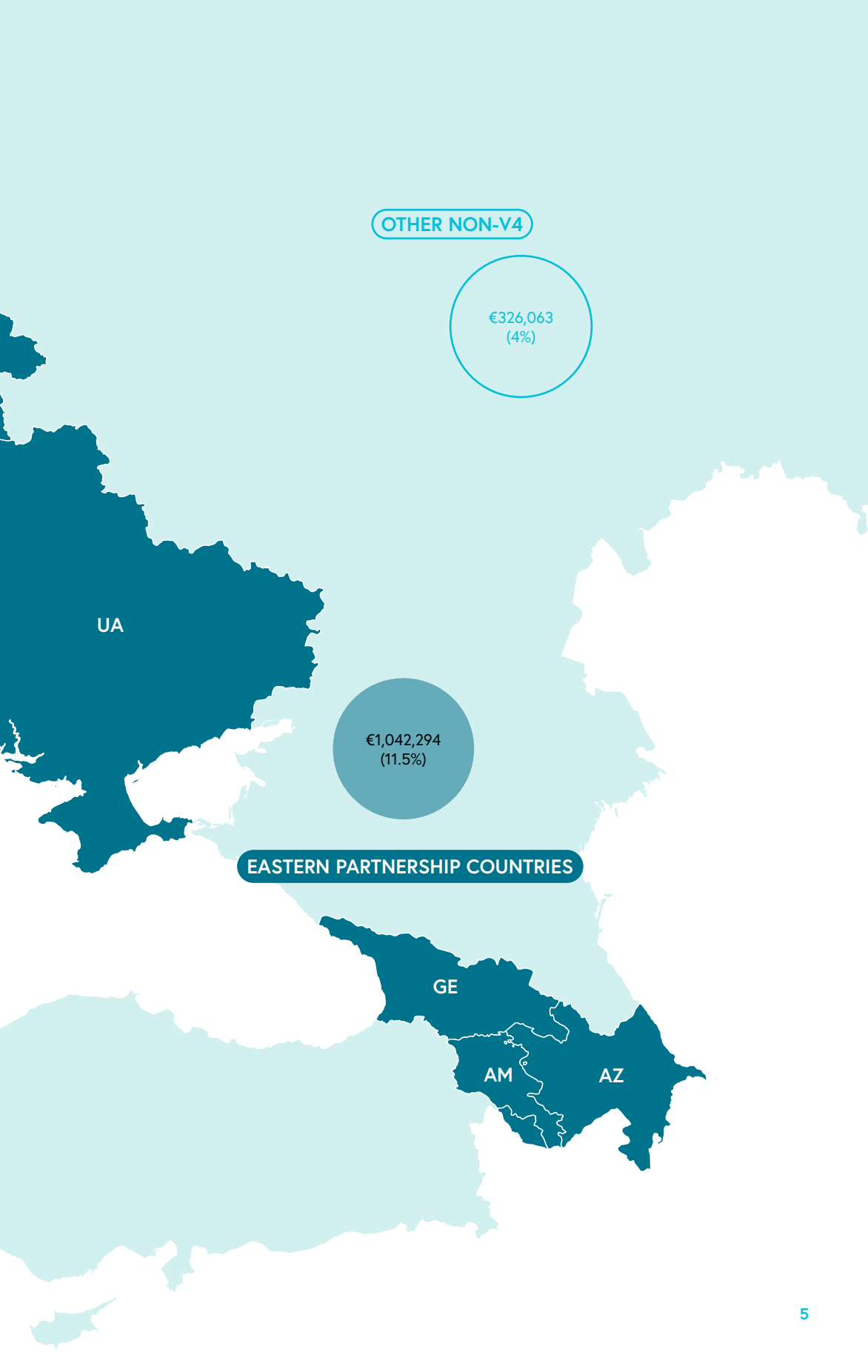
Nevertheless, the Fund still had to deal with its standard activities—with regular grants and mobility programs directed to entities both inside and outside of the Visegrad region. In this difficult situation, the Fund's team not only managed to successfully deal with all the regular tasks but also succeeded in developing, testing, and launching two new mobility tools—the V4 Gen Mini-Grants for youth exchanges, and Visegrad Fellowships for short research and lecture stays. It took a lot of effort and personal involvement from all members of the Fund's team with a special role by the Deputy Executive Director Marianna Neupauerová. Her term in office ended in January 2023; without her coordination and inspiration, the Fund's struggle with the challenges of 2022 would have been much more difficult.

APPROVED FUNDING BY COUNTRY/REGION 2022

V4 COUNTRIES



WESTERN BALKAN COUNTRIES



**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*; "NVCs" refers to the *national V4 coordinators*; "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 Deutsche Bank. All country codes follow the ISO 3166-1 alpha-2 standard.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2022 cannot avoid being framed by the Russian aggression against Ukraine. The events that have taken place since February 24 impacted the International Visegrad Fund functioning like nothing else to date. Ukrainian scholars had to postpone their formal duties, grants had to be changed or prolonged, and the number of unsolicited aid-seeking inquiries coming from various Ukrainian institutions has been at record-highs. At the same time, the Fund witnessed an increase in the number of submitted proposals dealing with the war's impact and the general security situation in the region.

In quick response to the war and the resulting influx of refugees escaping from Ukraine, the secretariat put out an extraordinary call for proposals to assist refugees stationed in the V4 region as well as internally displaced persons in the territory of Ukraine. Processing altogether 200 proposals, 72 grants were awarded, amounting to a total value of nearly €1 million. Additionally, three more humanitarian relief grant projects—two in Ukraine and one in Moldova—were approved in December 2022 with total value €387,000. Contracts governing these projects and their implementation will have taken place in 2023.

The secretariat continued in its regular activities and developed, tested, and launched a new youth-exchange tool—V4 Gen Mini-Grants. The first two deadlines in 2022 attracted many applicants which consequently led to 68 grants amounting to a total value of nearly €860,000. As of 2023, the program is set up in a regular system of 3 annual deadlines.

A new artist residency program with the focus on fashion design was also negotiated and finalized in cooperation with the Milan-based Accademia Costume & Moda. Its pilot edition is planned with the first deadline scheduled for March 2023.

As regards the regular grant projects, the "business as usual" was marked by an increase in applications related to the war and to improving conditions for Ukrainian refugees both in the V4 region and in Ukraine. Other than that, no significant changes were introduced apart from better streamlining youth exchanges projects that get financed from a separate "youth budget" which also covers the budget of the V4 Gen Mini Grants.

As regards mobility projects, the secretariat postponed the deadline for Ukrainian scholars applying for Visegrad Scholarships by one month to April 15; as a direct consequence, a record number of 75 Ukrainian scholars were approved for a total amount of €383,500. The belated deadline has been officially approved as the new annual deadline for the scholarships.

Finally, a new short-term academic mobility scheme titled simply Visegrad Fellowships was developed in the second half of 2022 which will facilitate 2- to 10-week research or lecture stays within the V4 region.

As regards the functioning of the Fund's secretariat, several instances of turnover within the staff took place in 2022 and preparations started for the change of the Deputy Executive Director to take place in January 2023.

In total, regular projects amounting to €9,016,126 were approved in 2022.

"The International Visegrad Fund is an international organisation at the heart of Central Europe—a unique place with a positively challenging atmosphere."





The International Visegrad Fund is an international organisation at the heart of Central Europe—a unique place with a positively challenging atmosphere. For me, it was a privilege and a pleasure to work there, in the wonderful company of a young team and under the leadership of three inspirational directors. We jointly have tried to keep up with times and trends, to consolidate and innovate the Fund's programmes with respect to the Fund's financial and personal capacities and its regional mission. I am proud of us providing Covid-related support to Eastern Partnership countries (2020/2021), setting up a new edition of the RDI programme with Japan (2021), successfully managing the extraordinary program for Ukrainian refugees (2022), upgrading the fellowship programme with the Open Society Archives in Budapest (2021) and Historical Archives of the European Union in Florence (2022), setting up a V4 gen mobility scheme, consolidating our residency programmes (2021) and starting a new fashion residency program in Milan (2022). Many encounters with our partners and grantees will be dearly remembered in my heart.

Marianna Neupauerová  
Deputy Executive Director

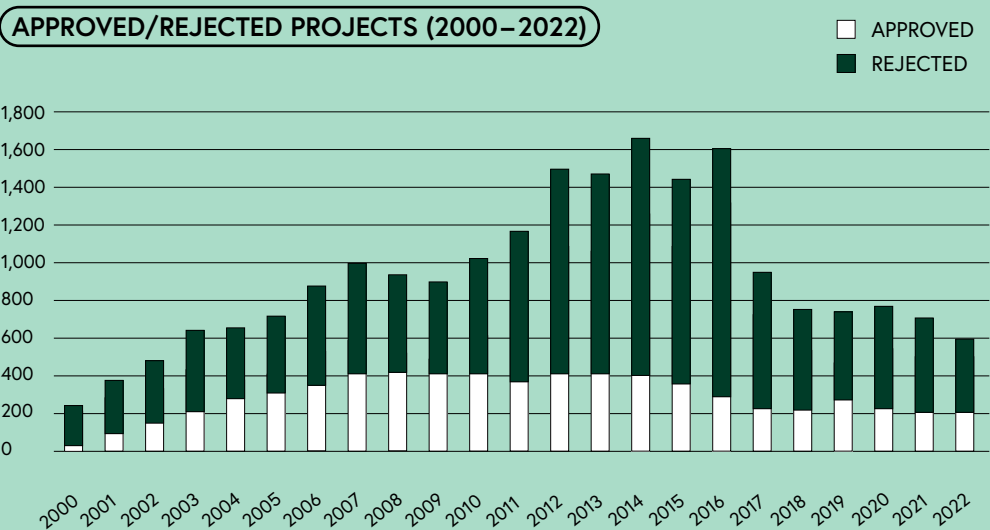
**ALTOGETHER  
204 REGULAR  
GRANT  
PROJECTS WERE  
APPROVED  
IN 2022.**

# I. GRANTS

## 1. Visegrad Grants/Visegrad+ Grants/ Visegrad Strategic Grants

Deadlines: February 1, June 1, October 1

Altogether 204 regular grant projects were approved in 2022. The "success" rate between the number of submitted and approved proposals in the end fell well within the long-term trend giving the chance to roughly every third applicant (see below):



### SUBMITTED/APPROVED—GRANTS 2022

| Deadline | Submitted | Approved | "Success rate" |
|----------|-----------|----------|----------------|
| February | 223       | 71       | 34.53%         |
| June     | 166       | 57       | 34.34%         |
| October  | 205       | 70       | 34.15%         |
| Total    | 594       | 204      | 34.34%         |

APPROVED GRANT SUMS PER PROGRAM AND RECIPIENT COUNTRY IN 2022 (€)

| <i>Region</i> | <i>Country</i> | <i>Visegrad Grants</i> | <i>Visegrad+ EaP</i> | <i>Visegrad+ WB6</i> |  |
|---------------|----------------|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--|
| V4            | CZ             | 921,623                | 144,889              | 32,930               |  |
|               | HU             | 895,920                | 0                    | 0                    |  |
|               | PL             | 972,569                | 102,115              | 48,915               |  |
|               | SK             | 906,001                | 82,164               | 25,000               |  |
| non-V4        | AM             |                        | 19,994               |                      |  |
|               | AT             |                        |                      | 25,000               |  |
|               | AZ             |                        | 24,300               |                      |  |
|               | BA             |                        |                      | 66,977               |  |
|               | HR             | 45,495                 |                      |                      |  |
|               | FR             | 160,442                |                      |                      |  |
|               | GE             |                        | 68,021               |                      |  |
|               | IT             | 24,640                 |                      |                      |  |
|               | XK             |                        |                      | 46,542               |  |
|               | MK             |                        |                      | 96,109               |  |
|               | PT             | 25,000                 |                      |                      |  |
|               | RS             | 18,300                 |                      | 45,190               |  |
|               | SE             |                        | 34,320               |                      |  |
|               | UA             |                        | 122,030              |                      |  |
|               |                | <b>3,969,990</b>       | <b>597,833</b>       | <b>386,663</b>       |  |

|  | <b>Strategic</b> | <b>Total €</b>   | <b>%</b>      | <b>Sum €</b> | <b>%</b> |
|--|------------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|----------|
|  | 285,139          | 1,384,581        | 24.49         | 4,832,029    | 85.46    |
|  | 51,170           | 947,090          | 16.75         |              |          |
|  | 324,799          | 1,448,398        | 25.62         |              |          |
|  | 38,795           | 1,051,960        | 18.60         |              |          |
|  |                  | 19,994           | 0.35          | 822,360      | 14.54    |
|  |                  | 25,000           | 0.44          |              |          |
|  |                  | 24,300           | 0.43          |              |          |
|  |                  | 66,977           | 1.18          |              |          |
|  |                  | 45,495           | 0.81          |              |          |
|  |                  | 160,442          | 2.84          |              |          |
|  |                  | 68,021           | 1.20          |              |          |
|  |                  | 24,640           | 0.44          |              |          |
|  |                  | 46,542           | 0.82          |              |          |
|  |                  | 96,109           | 1.70          |              |          |
|  |                  | 25,000           | 0.44          |              |          |
|  |                  | 63,490           | 1.12          |              |          |
|  |                  | 34,320           | 0.61          |              |          |
|  |                  | 122,030          | 2.16          |              |          |
|  | <b>699,903</b>   | <b>5,654,389</b> | <b>100.00</b> |              |          |

With regards to the applicants' geographical distribution (based on their official seat), the distribution has also followed the long-term trends of a relatively even distribution between the V4 countries oscillating between 17% and 26%, with the non-V4 applicants covering about 15% 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 the Western Balkans' 10 and Eastern Partnership's 8 regular grant projects.

With €5.6 million approved for regular grants, the average granted sum per project rose by 10% to almost €26,000 (specifically €27,718 compared to the average of €26,013 in 2021). Another trend continued where the average size of a grant grew while, at the same time, the average sizes became similar across the vehicles (i.e., grants were similar in size regardless of whether they were Visegrad or Visegrad+ Grants, or Strategic Grants). On average, a Visegrad Grant amounted to €25,449 compared to €24,282 in 2021, an average Visegrad+ Grant amounted to €30,766 compared to €29,556 in 2021, and a Strategic Grant amounted to €43,744 compared to €35,075 in 2021.

As regards the thematic focus of the supported projects (focus areas/objectives), *culture and common identity* remained the most frequent thematic category with almost a third of all supported projects, but *education and capacity building* continued "catching up" and the overall distribution thus appears more balanced than ever before—also in terms of an increased ratio of projects dealing with *innovation, R&D, and entrepreneurship*:

| <i>Focus area</i>                           | <i>%</i> |
|---|----------|
| Culture and common identity                 | 31.38    |
| Education and capacity building             | 29.26    |
| Regional development, environment, tourism  | 11.70    |
| Innovation, R&D, entrepreneurship           | 10.11    |
| Social development                          | 9.04     |
| Democratic values and the media             | 5.32     |
| Public policy and institutional partnership | 3.19     |

# (eng)aging! 2022

Active Ageing through Innovation:  
Learning from the COVID-19  
Pandemic in V4

## BUDGET

€ 9,983

## LEAD ORGANIZATIONS

Active Aging  
Center (Czechia)



The (eng)aging! project promotes a societal debate on population ageing and its impacts. It improves quality of life, social status and intergenerational relations for older people. At the same time, it contributes to changing the negative stereotypes about seniors present in public discourses. The project's aim is to increase public awareness about the topic of population ageing and to create a platform bringing together the Central European stakeholders dealing with population ageing.

## PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

The Czech Institute of Informatics, Robotics and Cybernetics at the Czech Technical University (Czechia), Technical University of Košice (Slovakia), Faculty of Electronics, Telecommunications and Informatics, Gdańsk University of Technology (Poland), Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Informatics, Budapest University of Technology and Economics (Hungary), Age Management (Czechia), Slovak Association of Age Management (Slovakia)



"Culture is a cornerstone of civilization, so we need to support and enrich it in any way possible."





It is thanks to culture that we can express our voices and opinions on various situations that we face today. We all relate to culture in our everyday lives even if we do not recognize it. It makes us stop for a while, enjoy the moment and dive deep into our own feelings. That is why I am interested in this field—to see how art and culture is evolving in various situations happening all around us, and how artists portray these happenings. Surprisingly, they still come up with something new and innovative. I personally relate to the project Pokoje/Rooms 2022 that provided a safe space for students in Prague to express their opinions on current affairs. Culture is a cornerstone of civilization, so we need to support and enrich it in any way possible.

Martin Marciňa  
Project Manager

Apart from the regular project categories (objectives/focus areas), the following strategic priorities were implemented in 2022:

**1. Research, Development, and Innovation; Digitalization**

Projects emphasizing the importance of mobility, networking, knowledge sharing and capacity building in the V4 & its neighborhood.

**2. Post-COVID Recovery**

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

**3. Challenges and Perspectives of the Young Generation in the Visegrad Region**

Promoting civic engagement and youth volunteerism; promoting technical, artistic and handcraft activities.

**STRATEGIC GRANTS 2022**

| <i>ID #</i> | <i>Project title</i>  | <i>Grantee</i>   | <i>Approved €</i> |
|-------------|---|--|-------------------|
| 22210017    | Minibreweries as developers of regional tourism in the V4 area                                    | Institute of Technology and Business in České Budějovice | 15,780            |
| 22210021    | Post-COVID Central Europe & Green Transition—AI-Assisted Impact analysis, Projections & Scenarios | Global Arena Research Institute                          | 26,801            |
| 22210253    | S4S: Smart V4 Strategies  | Czech Smart City Cluster                                 | 33,560            |
| 22210048    | Carpathian Eco-Tourism Project  | Humtour, LLC   | 26,150            |
| 22210016    | Supporting mental health in organizations: developing future business leaders                     | University of Warsaw                                     | 35,499            |
| 22220064    | Sustainable beekeeping in the Visegrad Group  | University of Veterinary Sciences Brno                   | 47,420            |

| <i>ID #</i>  | <i>Project title</i>   | <i>Grantee</i>                           | <i>Approved €</i> |
|--------------|--|--|-------------------|
| 22220037     | V4 Booster. Joint Degree and Academic Networking in Post-Pandemic Central Europe | Jagiellonian University in Cracow        | 198,900           |
| 22220018     | Urban Post-COVID Recovery in the V4 Countries                                    | University of Wrocław                    | 36,800            |
| 22230207     | Inclusion of Young Researchers from the V4+ Region in Top Research on the Cell   | Micron, z.s.                             | 28,987            |
| 22230234     | Russia 2030—What's Next?   | Association for International Affairs    | 21,990            |
| 22230248     | CEE Sustainable Finance Summit 2023—Navigating the path out of multiple crises   | International Sustainable Finance Centre | 24,900            |
| 22230098     | Visegrad Food Circle: Building Local Solidarity-Based Partnerships around Food   | Association of Conscious Consumers       | 25,020            |
| 222300094    | Hidden Visegrad Heritage: Artists' Studios On-Line                               | Arton Foundation                         | 53,600            |
| 22230012     | Visegrad Music Youth Academy 2023  | Ergon Art                                | 38,795            |
| <b>Total</b> |  |  | <b>699,903</b>    |

1 Although formally attributed to the applicant (Jagiellonian University in Cracow) and to Poland, the grant is in fact a continuation of the joint-degree program involving Masaryk University in Brno, the University of Pécs, and Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica and could be credited to each V4 country equally (€49,725 each).

"We hope to receive more inspiring projects on the topic of protecting minorities and underprivileged groups."



In 2022 we have supported projects focused on diverse target groups such as disadvantaged children and youth, elderly people, Ukrainian refugees, or homeless people within the social development focus area. I personally find projects that aim to protect minorities and provide them with tools to improve their living conditions very appealing. For example, projects that raise awareness of women's rights and gender equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina, focusing on mothers, women from marginalized communities, Roma women, and multiple disadvantaged women. Building engaged women's communities empowers them in society and reduces their inequality, which is a well-known phenomenon in the Visegrad countries. We hope to receive more inspiring projects on the topic of protecting minorities and underprivileged groups.

Barbora Ščepánková  
Project Manager

# Visegrad Young Film Days 2022



## BUDGET

€ 9,900

## LEAD ORGANIZATIONS

krutón (Czechia)

## PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Boiler (Slovakia), National Film Institute Hungary, Film Archive (Hungary), New Horizons Association (Poland).







Young Film Fest is an international film festival for young audiences aged 12–17. Over the course of three days, Young Film Fest presents the most interesting contemporary European films for young people, educates its visitors, connects contemporary art and film, and awards the Young Audience Award for a European film.

**"It still amazes me how many types of different activities can be done and how young people can use their potential to create amazing things."**





Within the one of the youngest grant programs of the Visegrad Fund, designed to support the mobility of young people, we have supported various types of activities—from culture to sport, theoretical education to practical skills. We have connected young people from different backgrounds and areas with diverse interests. It still amazes me how many types of different activities can be done and how young people can use their potential to create amazing things. For example, using a 3D printer and learning how it can be applied in medicine. Maybe there is, hidden somewhere among these young people, a future top cardio surgeon or nuclear physicist.

Katarína Palková  
Project Manager

# Bee Friendly



The Bee Friendly project shapes the attitudes among the residents of the Visegrad countries by undertaking regional partnership cooperation on the importance of bees & pollinators to human life. On one hand, the project covers a comprehensive information and education campaign. On the other hand, it organized a conference to increase the identification of local authorities with the global problem and indicate directions of possible actions.

## BUDGET

€ 8,496

## LEAD ORGANIZATIONS

Municipality of Rzeszow (Poland)

## PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Municipality of Nyíregyháza City with County Rank (Hungary), City of Stropkov (Slovakia), City of Kosice (Slovakia)



## 2. V4 Gen Mini-Grants

Deadlines: August 1, November 15 (as of 2023 regularly March 15, July 15, November 15)

With a pilot deadline scheduled for August, V4 Gen Mini-Grants, a new program facilitating youth mobility in the V4 region started and continued its regular operation on November 15. 118 and 121 proposals were officially registered out of which 68 projects were approved in 2022.

The program introduced the first instance of two-step applications in which draft proposals get screened before the entire form is open. This drafting period ends approximately two weeks before the eventual deadline. Despite a more demanding administration during the registration period, the process significantly shortened the individual evaluation periods and allows for speedier approval of the selected projects.

The first rounds of monitoring visits also took place in the second half of the year and feedback was collected throughout the period to ensure continual improvement of the processes.

Given the balanced character of each project where an equal number of participants from each country are expected, a decision was made to attribute the budgetary allocations (see Assigned budgets below) in a shared way, so that the eventual per-country budgets better reflect the involved people rather than the formal recipients (see Country-led Projects below) of the budgets (as it is in the other regular grant programs):

| <i>Country</i> | <i>Country-led Projects</i> | <i>Assigned budget</i> |
|----------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| CZ             | 3                           | 141,544                |
| HU             | 7                           | 97,436                 |
| PL             | 50                          | 236,356                |
| SK             | 8                           | 131,780                |
| AT             |                             | 2,500                  |
| DE             |                             | 8,666                  |
| UA             |                             | 240,319                |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>68</b>                   | <b>858,601</b>         |

"One thing stands out in 2022 in direct response to the war in Ukraine—the extraordinary wave of solidarity across the region..."



One thing stands out in 2022 in direct response to the war in Ukraine—the extraordinary wave of solidarity across the region where people from all walks of life have been assisting Ukrainian refugees. We were glad to assist the efforts of municipalities, schools, youth organizations and other civil society organizations by mobilizing an extraordinary €1 million in humanitarian assistance distributed through a call for proposals targeting organizations working with refugees in the V4 region as well as with internally displaced people directly in Ukraine. Слава Україні!

Jiří Sýkora  
Chief of Cabinet

### 3. Visegrad 4 Ukraine (Extraordinary Call for Proposals) Deadlines: rolling basis (April 2022)

Based on the decisions of the Council of Ambassadors and the Conference of Ministers (March and April 2022), an extraordinary new program was established to assist Ukrainian refugees in the V4 region as well as internally displaced persons in the territory of Ukraine as a direct consequence of the Russian aggression. Altogether €1 million was mobilized from the Fund's EaP chapter and grant program reserves to be made available to municipalities, CSOs and other public or private bodies supporting immediate humanitarian needs (personal hygiene products, food, energy supplies, etc.) and long-term integration of refugees incl. assistance with administrative (welfare, employment) issues as well as issues connected to children's schooling and free-time activities.

Altogether 199 proposals from all over the V4 region and Ukraine were submitted, out of which 72 grants were approved worth in total almost €1 million:

| <i>Country</i> | <i>No. of projects</i> | <i>Assigned budget</i> |
|----------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| CZ             | 16                     | 224,953                |
| HU             | 15                     | 212,491                |
| PL             | 14                     | 219,119                |
| SK             | 18                     | 222,243                |
| UA             | 9                      | 121,130                |
| <i>Total</i>   | <i>72</i>              | <i>999,936</i>         |

With regards to the distribution of support areas, as expected, more than a half of all projects targeted education and training activities and free-time activities for both children and adults:

| Area  | Sub-category  | %     |
|---|---|-------|
| Social and health services                        | Medical and psychological help for refugees                       | 7.64  |
|   | Foster help for unattended children                               |       |
|   | Capacity-building for social workers and volunteers               |       |
| Education and training                            | Ensuring placements and special care in kindergartens and schools | 28.03 |
|   | Integration of children to the new school environment             |       |
|   | Language courses for children and adults                          |       |
|   | Exchange programs and scholarships for refugees                   |       |
| Free-time activities for adults and children      | Excursions and study trips  | 23.57 |
|   | Cultural and social events for refugees and the local community   |       |
|   | Sport events and tournaments                                      |       |
| Employment  | Vocational trainings and skill development                        | 7.01  |
|   | Consultancy and support in job search for refugees                |       |
|   | Internships and placements  |       |
| Improving living conditions for vulnerable groups | Temporary and long-term housing services for vulnerable groups    | 12.10 |
|   | Special equipment and services for disabled refugees              |       |
| Other   |   | 21.66 |

"I personally visited a few organizations during the implementation period of the projects, and it was a pleasure to see that our goal to mitigate the effects of war was at least partially achieved."





As a citizen of Ukraine and part of the Visegrad Fund team, I am proud that our organization did not stand aside during such difficult times for my homeland. The Fund launched a special program "V4Ukraine" to help Ukrainians who suffered from the largest war in Europe in the last 77 years, and were forced to leave their homes and build a new life in the countries that provided them shelter. V4 organizations implemented all kinds of projects—language courses for adults and children, animal and art therapy, summer camps for kids, special aid for people with disabilities, cultural and sport programs, food services and so on. I personally visited a few organizations during the implementation period of the projects, and it was a pleasure to see that our goal to mitigate the effects of war was at least partially achieved.

Yelyzaveta Synetska  
Project Manager

**ALTOGETHER  
152 SCHOLARS  
WERE  
APPROVED  
FOR 308  
SEMESTERS  
IN TOTAL  
AMOUNTING  
TO €1,232,000.**

## II. SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS

### 1. Visegrad Scholarship Program

The Visegrad Scholarship Program attracted yet another record high number of proposals from the 16 eligible countries—1,101 (out of which 35 were found to be non-eligible). Scholars from Azerbaijan and Ukraine remained the biggest applicants with 759 and 138 registered applications respectively, and Poland became the third biggest altogether with 44 applications.

Comparing this to the actual approved scholars, the biggest number were the holders of Ukrainian, Polish and Slovak passports respectively receiving support covering 151, 50 and 25 semesters. Altogether 152 scholars were approved for 308 semesters in total amounting to €1,232,000. Given the experience from past editions when about 10% of scholars canceled before contracting, the overall official approved budget exceeded that of the program for the year. The actual implementation then will fit within the budgetary allocations.

Traditionally, the biggest interest was again registered in Polish higher-education institutions when applying; the eventual approval of the 308 semesters awarded most to Czechia, Poland and Slovakia (with 100, 95 and 81 semesters respectively).

**SCHOLARS/SEMESTERS PER CITIZENSHIP/HOST COUNTRY**

| <i>CC</i>    | <i>Scholars</i> | <i>Semesters</i> | <i>Host semesters</i> | <i>Total support (€)</i> |
|--------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| CZ           | 8               | 14               | 100                   | 185,000                  |
| HU           | 10              | 20               | 26                    | 89,000                   |
| PL           | 27              | 50               | 95                    | 267,500                  |
| SK           | 10              | 25               | 81                    | 184,000                  |
| AM           | 2               | 4                | 1                     | 11,500                   |
| AZ           | 5               | 8                | –                     | 20,000                   |
| BY           | 1               | 4                | –                     | 10,000                   |
| GE           | 3               | 6                | 1                     | 16,500                   |
| MD           | 1               | 2                | –                     | 5,000                    |
| UA           | 75              | 151              | 4                     | 383,500                  |
| AL           | –               | –                | –                     | 0                        |
| BA           | 1               |                  | –                     | 5,000                    |
| XK†          | –               |                  | –                     | 0                        |
| ME           | 2               |                  | –                     | 2,500                    |
| MK           | 8               |                  | –                     | 20,000                   |
| RS           | 13              |                  | –                     | 32,500                   |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>152</b>      | <b>308</b>       | <b>308</b>            | <b>1,232,000</b>         |

The three main long-term trends continued in 2022—the overwhelming interest from Azerbaijan, the relatively low interest among Czech scholars (less than a third of the turnout of the other V4 countries), as well as a general low interest in Hungarian higher-education institutions.

As regards the field of study, the highest interest within the approved scholarships was in *economics*, *political science* and *business* representing more than half of all approved scholarships:

| <i>Field</i>               | <i>#</i> | <i>%</i> |
|----------------------------|----------|----------|
| Economics                  | 241      | 21.89    |
| Political science          | 170      | 15.44    |
| Business                   | 159      | 14.44    |
| Engineering and technology | 144      | 13.08    |
| Computer science           | 69       | 6.27     |
| Languages and literature   | 64       | 5.81     |
| Biology                    | 44       | 4.00     |
| Sociology                  | 40       | 3.63     |
| History                    | 28       | 2.54     |
| Chemistry                  | 26       | 2.36     |
| Law                        | 18       | 1.63     |
| Earth science              | 17       | 1.54     |
| Psychology                 | 15       | 1.36     |
| <i>Visual arts</i>         | 15       | 1.36     |
| <i>Physics</i>             | 12       | 1.09     |
| <i>Performing arts</i>     | 11       | 1.00     |
| <i>Other</i>               | 28       | 2.54     |

# Near Space: Faster and Further

## BUDGET

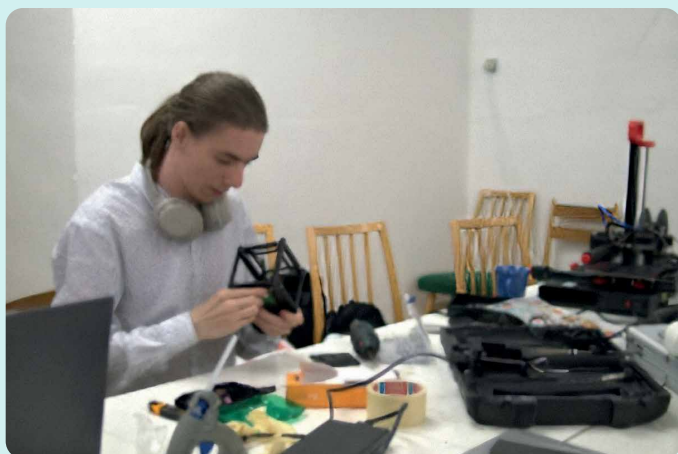
€ 25,110

## LEAD ORGANIZATIONS

Innovation Centre  
Mill of Knowledge  
(Poland)

## PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Copernicus Project  
Foundation (Poland),  
Slovak Organisation  
for Space Activities  
(Slovakia), Science to Go  
(Czechia), Serbian Office  
for Space, science,  
research and develop-  
ment (Serbia), Scientific  
Association for Infocom-  
munications (Hungary)





The Near Space project popularizes the knowledge about the upper parts of the Earth's atmosphere and near space among professionals and hobbyists interested in atmospheric and near space science and research. Practical workshops for children on how to build their own antennas and other activities popularizing near space are also organized.



"New online methods forced  
by the pandemic helped  
to connect more people in  
hybrid working models."







## 2. Visegrad–Taiwan Scholarship Program

The recently reopened cooperation with the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) in Prague continued with a second deadline on September 30, 2022. Of the 20 registered applications,

6 scholars were selected and eventually contracted. Given that quarantines were no longer in place, scholars could commence their trips at the very beginning of 2023.

| <i>Name</i>              | <i>CC</i> | <i>Discipline</i>          | <i>Host</i>                     | <i>Months</i> | <i>Support €</i> |
|--------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Paweł Majewski           | PL        | Engineering and technology | National Taiwan University      | 4             | 5,000            |
| Paweł Frankowski         | PL        | Political science          | National Chung Cheng University | 2             | 3,000            |
| Izabela Joško            | PL        | Biology                    | National Taiwan University      | 6             | 7,000            |
| Nicol Bernardová         | CZ        | Biology                    | Taipei Medical University       | 6             | 7,000            |
| Tobiasz Targosz          | PL        | Anthropology               | National Sun-Yat Set University | 10            | 11,000           |
| Justyna Maria Kowalczyk  | PL        | Biology                    | Academia Sinica                 | 4             | 5,000            |
| <i>Total support (€)</i> |           |                            |                                 |               | <b>38,000</b>    |

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

The outsourced research fellowship program operated in cooperation with the European Union Institute (EUI) in Florence concluded its initial 2-year pilot in 2022. Altogether 10 researchers were supported during the three deadlines in April and October 2021 and May 2022.

Due to the Russian aggression in Ukraine, the third deadline of the

pilot—originally planned for April 2022—got postponed until May 31, 2022.

Based on a positive evaluation of the 2-year pilot, the Fund's director signed a contract with the representatives of the EUI in October 2023, thus outlining the basic parameters for regular cooperation with annual support amounting to €37,500.

| <i>Scholar</i>     | <i>CC</i> | <i>Topic</i>  |
|--------------------|-----------|---|
| Matyja Bartosz     | PL        | The process of Poland's gradual opening and economic cooperation with the European Economic Community and GATT, 1964–1975                     |
| Metyn Venxha       | AL        | Perspectives and challenges of Albania's integration into the European Union, from the fall of communism to the Thessaloniki Summit 1991–2006 |
| Mykhailo Samofatov | UA        | Italian–Soviet gas diplomacy—A way to discover the European energy (in)security and Italy's political and economic integration in the EEC     |

# Cohesion of Public Libraries and Schools for Greater Community Participation

## BUDGET

€ 27,790

## LEAD ORGANIZATIONS

International Association Civitas Georgica (Georgia)



## PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

EDUKATOR (Poland), Foundation for Development of Democratic Rights (Hungary), Agora Central European Civic Association (Czechia)

This project raises library capacity to facilitate local social processes and promote Library-School Synergy as community mobilizers that support rural revitalization. It facilitates cohesion of three actors: libraries, public schools and local stakeholders to revitalize deactivated community participation in 6 municipalities of Georgia by sharing V4 experiences. Community libraries serve as spaces and vehicles for participation, cooperation and innovation among local actors.



**"We must continue funding projects reflecting on the impacts of and lessons learnt from the lockdowns."**



After working in education, I am always enthusiastic about working with projects in this area. In 2022, I especially enjoyed managing projects that tackled the impacts of Covid-19 in education. Although lockdowns seem to be over, they have made a deep and lasting impact on the lives of the current generation of students. That is why I am glad that we are moving on towards more inclusive and innovative education in the region thanks to the projects we have supported. We must continue funding projects reflecting on the impacts of and lessons learnt from the lockdowns. Examples include students' mental health, the exclusion of students living in digital poverty and the potential benefits of the period, such as rethinking the role of online educational tools and developing them further.

Éva Merenics  
Project Manager

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

Under the theme "Lessons of the Cold War?", there were two deadlines in 2022—in April and November.

Altogether 25 researchers were approved for funding in the two deadlines—11 and 14 respectively.

**DEADLINE: MAY 2022**

| <i>Name</i>          | <i>CC</i> | <i>Research title</i>  | <i>Length</i> |
|----------------------|-----------|--|---------------|
| Anna Adashinskaya    | RU        | Use, Abuse, and Refuse: Building and Challenging Political Narratives of Medieval Rus' in the Late USSR and Post-Soviet Russia | 2 months      |
| Virág Bogyo          | HU        | Children and Built Environments —in particular: playgrounds  | 2 months      |
| Christian Costamagna | IT        | The Kosovo War between history and memory: The (ab)use of historical events for political ends                                 | 2 months      |
| Maren Francke        | DE        | Historical Legacies from the Transition from Socialism to Democracy in Hungary   | 2 months      |
| Alexander Jakobson   | US        | Warring Works: The Russian Book of the 1960s and 1970s   | 2 months      |
| Faruh Kuziev         | TJ        | Borderlands in the Center: How Russia Domesticated the Tajik Civil War   | 2 months      |
| Benedek Pál          | HU        | Between Crisis and Reform: Polish and Hungarian Critical Intellectual Discourses on the Future of State Socialism 1975–1989    | 2 months      |
| Cameli Runceanu      | RO        | The Romanian Anti-communist Dissidents Mirrored by Radio Free Europe. Production, Recognition, Consecration                    | 5 weeks       |
| Grace Simpson        | UK        | Instrumentalizing past and present: tools for defending worker interests in the Polish People's Republic and Spanish State     | 2 months      |
| Tomas Sniegón        | SE        | Authoritarianism with human face? New analysis of Czechoslovak "Prague Spring 1968" and its "lessons from history"             | 2 months      |
| Naum Trajanowski     | MK        | Historicizing constitutional illiberalism in Poland: The Ehrlich-Kaczyński link  | 2 months      |

| <i>Name</i>            | <i>CC</i> | <i>Research title</i>   | <i>Length</i> |
|------------------------|-----------|---|---------------|
| Stanislaw Boridczenko  | PL        | The Power of History: A Description of the History of Polish–Belarusian Relations in the Post-Stalinist Soviet Mass Media as a Justification of Russian Domination over Belarus | 2 months      |
| Nergis Canefe          | CA        | Histories of Statelessness in Central and Eastern Europe: Silence, Memory, and Violence   | 2 months      |
| Ana Maria Catanus      | RO        | Disturbing the peace of Communist regimes. Unwritten histories of dissenters in the Romanian communist regime in the 1970s and 1980s  | 1 month       |
| Helka Dzsacsovski      | HU        | Cultural Diplomacy and Architectural Conservation in State-Socialist Hungary  | 2 months      |
| Gleb Golubkov          | RU        | Transitional Justice in Russia: A Case of Failure (1985–1993)   | 2 months      |
| Gwen Jones             | UK        | Tankies then and now: A taxonomy of continuities and shifts in Western leftist appeasement vocabularies   | 2 months      |
| Lindsay Kingston       | US/IT     | Weaponizing Citizenship: From the Soviet Union to Russia's Invasion of Ukraine  | 2 months      |
| Emma Krasznahorkai     | HU        | Media representation of refugees, with a special focus on refugee women   | 2 months      |
| Marko Miljkovic        | RS        | The Yugoslav Energy Wars: How Development of Energy Strategy Contributed to the Collapse of Yugoslavia  | 6 weeks       |
| Adam Nemeth            | HU        | Architecture and the second public sphere in Hungary 1974–1989  | 2 months      |
| Elisa Satjukow         | DE        | The Role of East and Southeast European Studies in the Transformations of the 1980/90s  | 6 weeks       |
| Zsuzsanna Varga        | HU/UK     | Dissidents, émigrés, and networks of information in Index on Censorship (1972–1991)   | 2 months      |
| Christine Varga-Harris | CA/US     | Materializing Ghost Towns: Soviet Military Barracks and Hungarian Daily Life during the Cold War  | 1 month       |
| Alexandra Zborovsky    | US/IT     | Should I Stay, or Should I Go: Jewish Emigration from the USSR 1955 to 1995   | 2 months      |



"...citizens, children, and wildlife enthusiasts can get closer to nature, observe endangered species, and discover other protected areas across the Carpathians."



Citizen Science in the Carpathians is an excellent example of a networking and capacity-building project that connects all three aspects from the Regional Development, Environment and Tourism focus area. Thanks to the E-learning course, protected areas managers as well as NGO representatives can become more familiar with the Citizen Science methodology, its principles and find the way how to boost locals' interest in protected areas by involving them in the BioBlitz event. As a result of it, citizens, children, and wildlife enthusiasts can get closer to nature, observe endangered species, and discover other protected areas across the Carpathians. In the future, I hope to see even more initiatives combining regional, environmental, and touristic activities in our projects.

Kateřina Šrámková  
Project Manager



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

# III. ARTIST RESIDENCIES

Artist residencies continued to be the most diverse mobility program the Fund operates. Negotiations took place during 2022 regarding a new residency chapter focusing on fashion/textile design with potential partners in Milan (to be launched in 2023).

As in 2021, a single deadline was set for all programs except for the Literary Residencies and the following are the summary results of the calls for Performing and Visual & Sound Arts residencies:

## Visual & Sound Arts

| CC           | Artists   |               | Hosts     |               | Total (€)     |
|--------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|---------------|---------------|
|              | Projects  | €             | Projects  | €             |               |
| CZ           | 4         | 8,000         | 7         | 17,500        | 25,500        |
| HU           | 4         | 8,000         | 3         | 7,500         | 15,500        |
| PL           | 4         | 8,000         | 2         | 5,000         | 13,000        |
| SK           | 4         | 8,000         | 4         | 10,000        | 18,000        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>16</b> | <b>32,000</b> | <b>16</b> | <b>40,000</b> | <b>72,000</b> |

## Performing Arts

| CC           | Artists  |               | Hosts    |               | Total (€)     |
|--------------|----------|---------------|----------|---------------|---------------|
|              | Projects | €             | Projects | €             |               |
| CZ           | 2        | 8,000         | 4        | 11,000        | 19,000        |
| HU           | 2        | 8,000         | 1        | 3,500         | 11,500        |
| PL           | 2        | 8,000         | 1        | 2,000         | 10,000        |
| SK           | 2        | 8,000         | 2        | 5,500         | 13,500        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>8</b> | <b>32,000</b> | <b>8</b> | <b>22,000</b> | <b>54,000</b> |

Regarding the prestigious residencies in New York, two deadlines occurred in 2022—on March 1 (budgeted and taking place in 2022) and at the regular joint deadline on October 15 (taking place and budgeted in 2023). Cooperation regarding the literary residencies continued in the tenth edition with Villa Decius in Cracow and the applications were again collected and processed "in house" by the Fund just as in 2021.

Of the total number of 90 applicants, altogether 32 authors were selected to conduct the 6-week compact spring residency and the 3-month autumn edition (16 in each).

COMPACT SPRING EDITION (6 WEEKS)

| <i>Name</i>             | <i>CC</i> | <i>Host Organization</i>                           |
|-------------------------|-----------|--|
| Petr Manteuffel         | CZ        | Arts Institute in Prague                           |
| Krzysztof Bartnicki     | PL        | Arts Institute in Prague                           |
| Barbora Hřínová         | SK        | Arts Institute in Prague                           |
| András Fodor            | HU        | Arts Institute in Prague                           |
| Gabriella Csutak        | HU        | Centre for Information on Literature in Bratislava |
| Anna Cieplak            | PL        | Centre for Information on Literature in Bratislava |
| Flóra Peťovská          | SK        | Centre for Information on Literature in Bratislava |
| Marta Součková          | SK        | Petőfi Literary Museum in Budapest                 |
| Michał Sobol            | PL        | Petőfi Literary Museum in Budapest                 |
| Zsuzsanna Juhászné Hahn | HU        | Petőfi Literary Museum in Budapest                 |
| Jiří Macháček           | CZ        | Petőfi Literary Museum in Budapest                 |
| Ladislav Šerý           | CZ        | Villa Decius Association                           |
| Marcin Dymiter          | PL        | Villa Decius Association                           |
| Eszter Molnár           | HU        | Villa Decius Association                           |
| Nicol Hochholczerová    | SK        | Villa Decius Association                           |
| Pavla Horáková          | CZ        | Centre for Information on Literature in Bratislava |

# AUTUMN EDITION (3 MONTHS)

| <i>Name</i>          | <i>CC</i> | <i>Host Organization</i>                           |
|----------------------|-----------|--|
| Ada Rączka           | PL        | Arts Institute in Prague                           |
| Dora Kapralova       | CZ        | Arts Institute in Prague                           |
| Ivana Gibová         | SK        | Arts Institute in Prague                           |
| Soma Csete           | HU        | Arts Institute in Prague                           |
| Olga Stawińska       | PL        | Centre for Information on Literature in Bratislava |
| Vojtěch Němec        | CZ        | Centre for Information on Literature in Bratislava |
| Zoltán Márió Nemes   | HU        | Centre for Information on Literature in Bratislava |
| Tünde Mészáros       | SK        | Centre for Information on Literature in Bratislava |
| Irena Makarewicz     | PL        | Petőfi Literary Museum in Budapest                 |
| Anna Luňáková        | CZ        | Petőfi Literary Museum in Budapest                 |
| Marta Patak          | HU        | Petőfi Literary Museum in Budapest                 |
| Silvia Ruppeldtová   | SK        | Petőfi Literary Museum in Budapest                 |
| Ilka Blaszczyk-Zakor | HU        | Villa Decius Association                           |
| Jarosz Łukasz        | PL        | Villa Decius Association                           |
| Miloš Hroch          | CZ        | Villa Decius Association                           |
| Ivana Komanická      | SK        | Villa Decius Association                           |

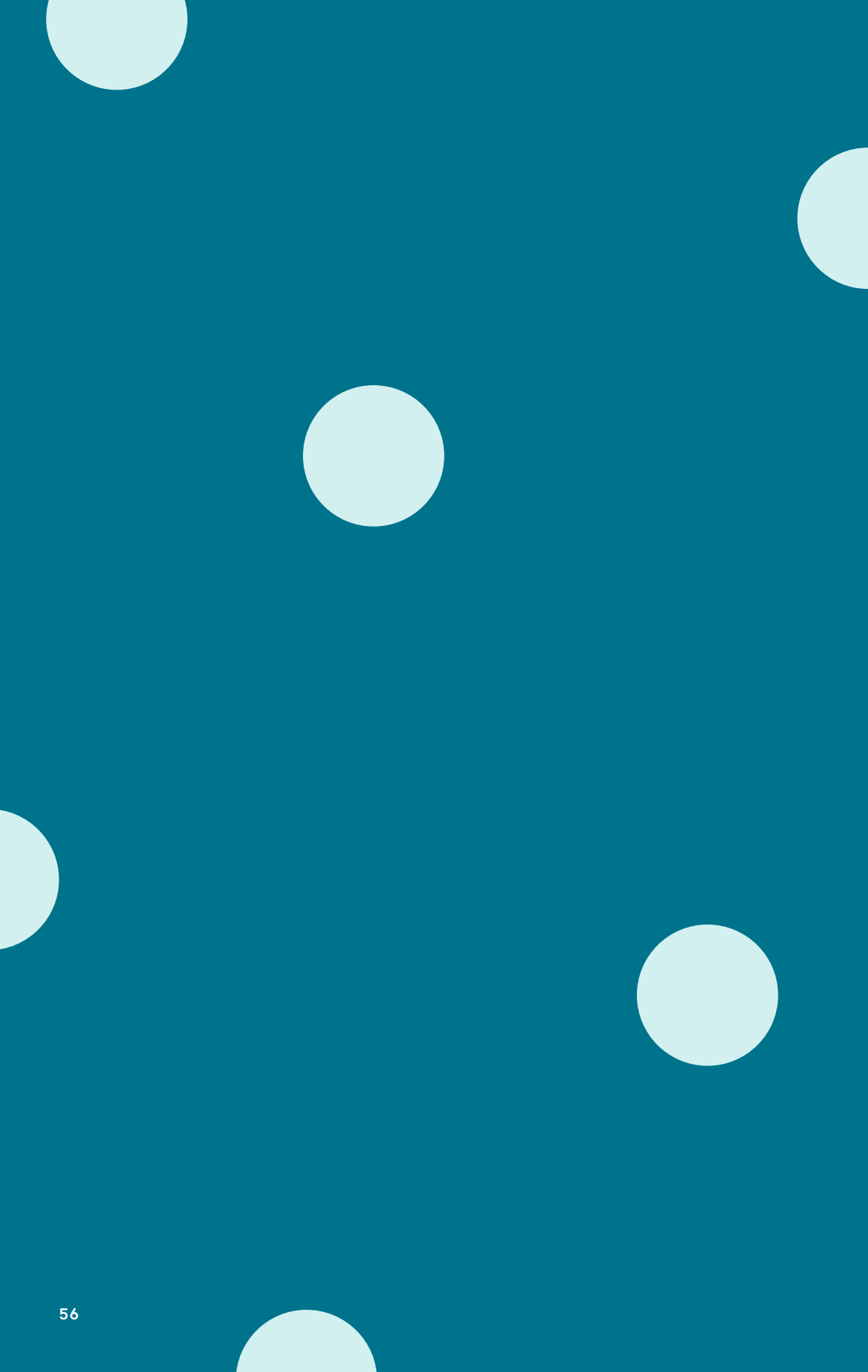
"As somebody fascinated by all forms of art, I realize that arts residencies are essential in providing a space for artists to develop their projects, explore, and experiment."





In 2022, we continued our efforts to connect cultural spaces and professionals regionally through our four residency programs in literary, visual, sound, and performing arts. As somebody fascinated by all forms of art, I realize that arts residencies are essential in providing a space for artists to develop their projects, explore, and experiment. I am delighted that thanks to our residency programs, 60 talented artists could find space for concentrated work, gain new connections, and change their perspectives. We intend to stay up to date with international trends and respond to artists' changing needs by fine-tuning our residency programs. That is why we visited as many residencies as we could in the past year and had many insightful conversations with artists and hosts alike.

Orsolya Rigó  
Project Manager



# IV. OTHER PROJECTS

## 1. Visegrad Strategic Conferences

The budget of the Strategic Conferences program continued with its €500,000 annual allocation in 2022 with some traditional events in Prague and Bratislava but also a new Balkans Forum conference organized in Budapest and a newly decided support to the Brain Bar festival:

| <i>ID code</i>            | <i>Grantee</i>                          | <i>Project title</i>                    | <i>Budget (€)</i> |
|---------------------------|---|---|-------------------|
| VSC22CZ1                  | EUROPEUM                                | Prague European Summit 2022             | 30,000            |
| VSC22CZ2                  | Forum 2000 Foundation                   | 26 <sup>th</sup> Forum 2000 Conference  | 95,000            |
| <b><i>CZ Subtotal</i></b> |   |   | <b>125,000</b>    |
| VSC22HU1                  | Institute for Foreign Affairs and Trade | Budapest Balkans Forum                  | 75,000            |
| VSC22HU2                  | Brain Bar, Ltd.                         | Brain Bar Budapest Festival             | 50,000            |
| <b><i>HU Subtotal</i></b> |   |   | <b>125,000</b>    |
| VSC21SK1                  | Globsec                                 | GLOBSEC 2022 Bratislava Forum           | 95,000            |
| VSC21SK2                  | Slovak Foreign Policy Association       | Central European Energy Conference 2022 | 30,000            |
| <b><i>SK Subtotal</i></b> |   |   | <b>125,000</b>    |
| <b><i>Total</i></b>       |   |   | <b>375,000</b>    |

# V4 Support to Promote a WB6 Common Regional Market: One Market for Post-COVID Recovery

## BUDGET

€ 35,780

## LEAD ORGANIZATIONS

Montenegrin  
Pan-European  
Union  
(Montenegro)

## PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Union of the Robert Schuman Institute for Developing Democracy in Central-Eastern Europe (RSI) (Hungary), Center for Social and Economic Research (Poland), Institute for Politics and Society (Czechia), Macro-Economic and Social Analyses 10 (Slovakia), Albanian Center for Economic Research (Albania), Foreign Policy Initiative (Bosnia and Herzegovina), FINANCE THINK – Economic, Research and Policy Institute, Skopje (North Macedonia), Center for Foreign Policy (Serbia), Riinvest Institute for Development Research (Kosovo\*)





The project focuses on sharing experiences, transferring knowledge, and recommending further regional economic integration through development of the WB6 Common Regional Market using experiences from ex-CEFTA and V4 after integration into the EU single market. Project products (e-book and storytelling video) and events (conference, roundtable, webinar, lectures) address the difference in economic cooperation before and after entering the EU and how to speed up the process of European integration, with a focus on closer economic cooperation between the V4 and WB6 in the post-COVID period.

"With an aggressive war raging right next to our borders, we find it even more crucial to promote democratic values and facilitate the knowledge transfer from the V4 to these countries."



Of the ten projects we supported in the Democracy focus area in 2022, six are taking place in the Eastern Partnership and the Western Balkans countries. It clearly shows the Fund's continuous commitment to help with the democratization process of our neighboring regions and to build resilience against disinformation or hybrid threats. With an aggressive war raging right next to our borders, we find it even more crucial to promote democratic values and facilitate the knowledge transfer from the V4 to these countries.

Daniel Péter  
Project Manager



## 2. Think Visegrad Think-Tank Network + the Mid-Term Conference

The Think Visegrad think-tank platform concluded its eleventh year of operations in March 2023. The following six **short-term analyses** were produced as part of the assignments:

- V4+DE—What to expect from Germany and its new administration?
- The question of Taiwan and the impact on world politics: positions of the V4 countries, the case of Lithuania and prospects
- French EU Presidency priorities (especially vis-à-vis V4 policy priorities)
- The implications of Baltic states' withdrawal from the 17+1 Initiative for the future of this format
- Results of the Italian parliamentary elections and their impact on the EU cooperation and policies
- U.S. Midterm Elections

Furthermore, four **long-term analyses** were produced dealing with the key current affairs that directly impact the V4 region:

- France—trends and future endeavours
- Impact of the Russia–Ukraine war on European security and international order: a scenario analysis
- V4 defense cooperation
- Western Balkans—spiral of regress or new impetus for a revitalization of the enlargement process?

Additionally, a new type of a long-term analysis titled Western Balkans Scoreboard was developed for long-term monitoring of the progress/regress of the Western Balkan countries and was presented at the Analytical Days of Sveroslav Bombík held at the Slovak Republic's Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs in September 2022.

In total, nine **visiting fellows** from non-V4 countries received support for short-term research stays in the respective think tanks with one being belatedly supported from the 2021 edition.

The eighth annual **Mid-Term Review Conference** was organized by the Institute of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary and the Center for Euro-Atlantic Integration on February 23–24, 2022, in Budapest. The program focused on the possibilities for cooperation between V4 and the UK, the V4 agenda on climate change and European strategic autonomy. The entire budget of the grant amounting to €12,000 was utilized according to the plan.

### 3. Think Visegrad in Brussels

EUROPEUM's Brussels office continued to enjoy the full support of the Think Visegrad platform and served as its Brussels hub during 2022. Altogether the following four private roundtables were organized:

- Work in Progress: Reforming EU's Migration and Asylum policy vis-à-vis French and Czech presidencies to the Council of the EU (in cooperation with the Egmont Institute)
- Keeping the Enlargement policy in ch(z)eck: How to steer the Western Balkans towards the EU in times of Geopolitical Earthquakes? (in cooperation with the SWP Brussels Office)
- From Prague to Chişinău: What is the future for the European Political Community?
- Rethinking European Energy Security

For scheduling problems, only a single public debate event was organized in Brussels in cooperation with the European Digital Finance Association in November 2022:

- AI Act: Regulating the Regulated?

The remaining two events—one on Disinformation in Central Europe and the other on Cybersecurity and Hybrid Threats are to be scheduled for March 2023 and a suitable date in Q2 2023.

The bi-monthly continued to be disseminated to 2,500 key contacts and was further boosted by a newly created Facebook page for the platform.

Finally, the platform managed to catch up with a delayed implementation of hosting fellowships caused by travel restrictions in 2021 and hosted 10 fellows throughout the year:

|            |                                  |
|------------|----------------------------------|
| PISM       | Tomas Zornaczuk                  |
| GLOBSEC    | Orsolya Ráczová, Lucia Rybníková |
| IIR Prague | Míla O'Sullivan                  |
| IFAT       | Ferenc Németh                    |
| CEID       | Dorka Takácsy                    |
| SFPA       | Miroslava Pisklová, Ivana Uličná |
| EUROPEUM   | Christian Kvorning Lassen        |
| OSW        | Krzysztof Nieczypor              |

**"I believe that field observations encourage the Fund to better reflect the inherent complexity of its interventions in the Eastern Partnership by continuous learning and follow-up to promote regional cooperation."**



We recognize the value of joint engagement between the Fund and various local stakeholders such as NGOs, academia, V4 Embassies, Ministries and UNDP offices in delivering more comprehensive support. The Visegrad Fund remains committed to making sure that its work is informed by the field experiences of its partners, and that we bring their realities to regional forums. This commitment in the Eastern Partnership region is illustrated through visits to Georgia and Armenia that members of our team conducted in 2022. The visit concluded with a set of recommendations emphasizing the role of diverse actors across disciplines in analysing and implementing future involvement. I believe that field observations encourage the Fund to better reflect the inherent complexity of its interventions in the Eastern Partnership by continuous learning and follow-up to promote regional cooperation.

Anna Adamczyk  
Project Manager

## 4. Civil Servant Mobility Program

Postponements caused by travel restrictions also affected the training visits of civil servants by concluding five visits altogether from the 2020 and 2022 editions focusing on Kosovo and Ukraine (2020), and Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, and Ukraine (2022).

The editions took the following schedule in each country:

| <i>Host country</i> | <i>Target</i>          | <i>Dates</i>         |
|---------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Czechia             | Ukraine (2020 & 2022)  | Aug. 29–Sep. 2, 2022 |
|                     | Bosnia and Herzegovina | Sep. 19–23, 2022     |
|                     | North Macedonia        | Oct. 10–13, 2022     |
|                     | Kosovo (2020)          | Oct. 17–21, 2022     |
| Hungary             | Bosnia and Herzegovina | Sep. 11–17, 2022     |
|                     | North Macedonia        | Oct. 9–15, 2022      |
|                     | Ukraine (2020 & 2022)  | Nov. 15–18, 2022     |
| Poland              | Kosovo (2020)          | Apr. 24–May 1, 2022  |
|                     | Ukraine (2022)         | Sep. 25–30, 2022     |
|                     | North Macedonia        | Oct. 3–8, 2022       |
|                     | Bosnia and Herzegovina | Oct. 10–15, 2022     |
| Slovakia            | North Macedonia        | Sep. 19–23, 2022     |
|                     | Ukraine (2022)         | Sep. 26–Oct. 2, 2022 |
|                     | Bosnia and Herzegovina | Nov. 13–18, 2022     |

## 5. V4 Energy Think Tank Platform

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, and was therefore concluded only later in the year. As a result, the 2022 edition never materialized.

# Increasing renovation rate of buildings in Visegrad countries through the Renovation Wave

## BUDGET

€ 25,500

## LEAD ORGANIZATIONS

Buildings for the future (Slovakia)



## PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

National Energy Saving Agency (Poland), Hungarian Energy Efficiency Institute (Hungary), Chance for Buildings (Czechia)

The European Commission presented individual proposals within the Renovation Wave to help renovate buildings. The project offers public debates at the V4 level with the aim to motivate governments to consider public positions and to deliver the position of relevant stakeholders. The initiative supports adopting quality public policies to fulfil the climate objectives.

"It is great to observe the ways connections can be strengthened and how knowledge is shared among the V4 experts as well as how the best practices from our countries can be transferred to the partners in the EaP and WB regions."



Projects from the Public Policy and Institutional Partnership focus area address a broad spectrum of issues in the V4, Eastern Partnership and Western Balkan countries by promoting policy change and good governance. They aim to connect expert communities and relevant stakeholders with decision-makers. In 2022 we were supporting both new initiatives as well initiatives building on the previously implemented projects. The project Empowering Serbian CSOs involved in the decarbonization process through the V4 experience was one of the new initiatives that was supported in the February call of 2022. Later that year, a follow-up project focusing on further support of reforms in Armenia with V4 know-how in i.a. municipal governance, healthcare and digitalization was approved. This time, one of the projects was implemented with financial contribution from the Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Korea. It is great to observe the ways connections can be strengthened and how knowledge is shared among the V4 experts as well as how the best practices from our countries can be transferred to the partners in the EaP and WB regions.

Karolina Janik  
Project Manager



## 6. V4 Startup Force

Design Terminál, Kft. continued with the V4 Startup Force in cooperation with DEX (CZ) and Campus (SK) while changing the Polish partner to Startup Hub Poland. The budgeted sum of €148,252.00 was fully utilized through the usual outputs—a hybrid lecturing program, an on-line bootcamp and one-on-one mentoring sessions and pitching for a for an international jury.

## 7. Visegrad Bicycle Races

The tenth edition of bicycle races organized under the single banner of the Visegrad Bicycle Race took place in 2022. Based on the decision of the NVCs (formally approved by the Conference of Ministers while passing the 2023 budget), this edition was the last one with €80,000 budget and the trend of gradual lowering the support will start with the future 2024 edition amounting to €60,000. Eventually, the grantees will be recommended to (jointly) apply for funding within the regular deadlines of Visegrad Grants. Below is the overview of the respective granted sums and implementation dates:

| <i>Grantee</i>                                    | <i>Dates</i>  | <i>Awarded sum (€)</i> |
|---|---------------|------------------------|
| Czech Cycling Federation,<br>Prague               | June 9, 2022  | 16,000                 |
| Movement Health Recreation<br>Sport Club, Budaörs | July 23, 2022 | 16,000                 |
| Dolnośląski Związek Kolarski,<br>Wrocław          | July 10, 2022 | 16,000                 |
| Slovak Cycling Federation,<br>Bratislava          | July 24, 2022 | 32,000                 |
| <i>Total</i>                                      |               | 80,000                 |

## 8. V4 innovators in Israel Training Program

After the repeated delays and deadline postponements, the second part of the pilot edition of the *V4 Innovators in Israel training program* finally materialized under the title "The Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in Israel: Transforming an Idea to a Business" and took place from September 4–15, 2022, in Haifa, Israel.

In the end, altogether 28 representatives of startups and incubators were selected for the program—8 from each of Czechia, Hungary, and Poland, and 4 from Slovakia. As before, the Slovak Innovation and Energy Agency sent their employee as a chaperone with the group.

The final pilot program evaluation and proposals for its future development are to be discussed during Q1–2 2023.

## 9. Western Balkans Fund

Cooperation with the Western Balkans Fund (WBF) continued for the 6<sup>th</sup> year in a row utilizing the technical assistance grant (amounting to €40,000) for the period 2022–2023.

Following the memorandum from Poznań/Rogalin from June 28, 2021, experience-sharing continued through training visits of WBF's staff to the Fund and so did joint evaluation of Western Balkan-related grant projects submitted within all three 2022 deadlines of Visegrad/Visegrad+ Grants.

"It is heartwarming to be able to support development of the Western Balkans region, especially if our help is empowering the voices of local communities."



In 2022, we had a great opportunity to visit all the countries of the Western Balkans region. We were very excited to meet many of our grantees as well as representatives of civil society organizations which were interested in our grant schemes, but have never cooperated with us before. Together with my colleagues, we have consulted dozens of new proposals which were later submitted in the following Visegrad+ Grant Open Calls. It is heartwarming to be able to support development of the Western Balkans region, especially if our help is empowering the voices of local communities.

Ewelina Stacherzak  
Project Manager



358,206  
FACEBOOK  
USERS AND  
24,964  
INSTAGRAM  
USERS.  
WE HAVE GOT  
1,796 NEW  
FOLLOWERS  
ON BOTH  
PLATFORMS

# V. PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

The year was framed by the preparation and finalization of the core communication strategy as the basic guidelines document for external and internal communication, further development of social media channels, and an increased number of in-person presentations/info sessions as well as monitoring visits to events organized with the fund's support.

The main goals and achievements of the year:

- Identifying and eventually outsourcing a PR/branding consultant
- Preparation of the Fund's Communication Strategy
- Adoption of a new set of guidelines and a finalized manual of the institution's visual identity
- 7 newsletters reaching 6,785 people
- 358,206 Facebook users and 24,964 Instagram users. We have got 1,796 new followers on both platforms
- Establishment of a LinkedIn fan page (active as of June 2022) with 1,171 followers

The "Project of the Year" contest (2021) selected "Wyszehrad non-fiction" by Kino Na Granicy/Kino na hranici (PL) in collaboration with Wind Mills (CZ), Absynt (SK) and the Terra Recognita Foundation for a Central European Dialogue (HU).

The annual anniversary reception was held at the Czech Centre in Bratislava on June 15, 2022.

A debate was organized under the title "Russian Aggression against Ukraine: Re-thinking the Support of Civil Societies in the Eastern Partnership" at the 2022 Globsec Bratislava Forum.

There were many public presentations and info sessions the staff conducted throughout the year. The highest turnout proved to always be outside of the capitals even in instances when the fund's staff pooled the presentations with other donors (e.g., at the Representation of the European Commission in Prague) or held hybrid events. Presentations and info sessions took place in the following cities (among others):

Belgrade, Bratislava, Brno, Budapest, České Budějovice, Cracow, Gdańsk, Hradec Králové/Pardubice, Karlovy Vary, Katowice, Kecsekemét, Michalovce, Miskolc, Nyíregyháza, Olomouc, Ostrava, Plzeň, Poprad, Poznań, Prague, Skopje, Sopron, Szeged, Tbilisi, Warsaw, Yerevan, Zlín

Furthermore, several on-line networking events were organized during the year to connect past and potential grantees and assist them with their project ideas (the so-called "networking sessions").

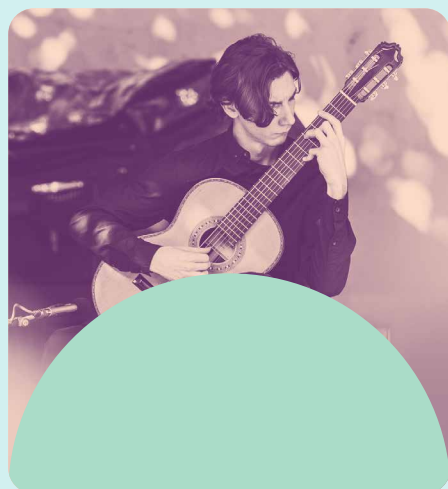
"I am very pleased with the developments in the Fund's PR department during 2022. Having our Communication Strategy in hands, we have implemented its vision to an even greater extent."

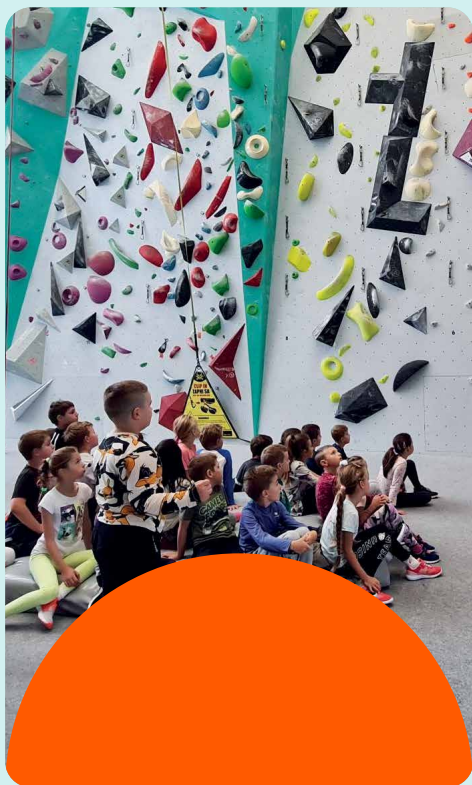


I am very pleased with the developments in the Fund's PR department during 2022. Having our Communication Strategy in hands, we have implemented its vision to an even greater extent. Not only have we reached out to our priority target group Youth from the ages of 12–30, but we have also enlarged our cooperation with organizations from Ukraine that needed our help the most. Thanks to our in-person meetings with people from smaller cities, we have also managed to attract smaller organizations and other public representatives. That is visible both in the raising number of followers on our social media and in the number of new applicants turning to us. I am especially proud of our Project of the Year competition, promoting exceptional projects since 2016. In 2022, the award went to the project Wyszegrad non-fiction—festival Kino na hranici combining film with literature. We have also started with the process of creating a new visual identity and I am already looking forward to it!

Lucia Rafaj Becová  
PR Manager







- 
- Visegrad Fund
- 
-