

Think  
Visegrad  
V4 Think-Tank Platform

# NEWSLETTER

2016/02

Think Visegrad in Brussels

## Editorial



Dear all,

Allow me to warmly invite you to read the second issue of the Think Visegrad in Brussels (TVB)\* newsletter. With Slovakia at the helm of the EU and Poland presiding the Visegrad Group, we are living the rather rare concurrency of EU and V4 presidencies. The first time this happened was in 2011 when the Presidency of the Council of the EU was held by Hungary and Poland, while the V4 Group was led by Slovakia and the Czech Republic respectively. And the next occasion will only come in 2022. Think Visegrad in Brussels plans to contribute to increasing the visibility of the region in EU debates in this exciting period with events and research, which will be introduced in this newsletter. In order to set off the school year properly, we also make room for introducing who's in the class. There are eight core think-tanks participating in the Think Visegrad in Brussels project and we'll subsequently introduce all of them in our newsletters. This issue features the presentation of one Slovak and one Polish think-tank: the Research Centre of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association (RC SFPA) and the Society of the Institute of East-Central Europe (TIESW).

As always, I remain at your disposal for your questions and comments about the project.

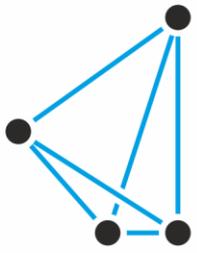
Kind Regards  
Zuzana Pickova  
Head of EUROPEUM Brussels Office



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\*Think Visegrad in Brussels is a project implemented by the EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy and funded by the International Visegrad Fund. The aim of the project is to strengthen the voice and visibility of the Central European countries at the heart of the EU policy debates and to encourage the EU dialogue back in the region.



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## 1. The First V4 Researcher Comes for Brussels Fellowship

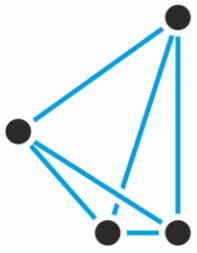
Thanks to Think Visegrad in Brussels, four researchers, one from each Visegrad Group country, will have a chance to complete a one week research fellowship in Brussels. Supported by an International Visegrad Fund grant, the researchers take this opportunity to talk to EU policy-makers, fellow think-tankers and other experts, to analyse issues of mutual importance for the EU and the V4 and write a policy paper on it. The first researcher to do his fellowship in September is Dr. Tomasz Stępniewski from The Society of the Institute of East-Central Europe (TIESW). Dr. Stępniewski will deliver a paper with the working title 'The EU's Eastern Partnership and the Way Forward After Riga.'

## 2. EUROPEUM Starts Monitoring of EU Policies

Being the ears and the eyes of the TVB members in Brussels, EUROPEUM will provide monitoring of EU policies to them. The bi-weekly briefing will summarize key developments in four policy areas: economy, energy, digital agenda and foreign and security policy. In order to bring the most added value, we will also keep an eye on the relevant funding opportunities offered by the EU institutions. In addition, we will include information on upcoming events and the most relevant latest publications by Brussels based institutions on the monitored issues.

## 3. November Event to Focus on Security Issues

In November, TVB is planning to organize a first public event discussing "Security in Europe from a Visegrad Perspective". The event will include two panels, one debating the role of the V4 in the post-BREXIT strategic and geopolitical framework, and the second examining the role of partnerships and neighborhood policy in Central European security. A keynote speech by an EEAS official will frame the discussions of our first event. Speakers from established think-tanks will take on questions such as the matching of expectations between Central Europe and the EU or NATO, the migration influx to Europe and the role of Visegrad in diminishing its external aspects, the role of Central Europe in pursuing an ambitious enlargement agenda and in projecting stability in the Western Balkans and Eastern Partnership countries. The exact date and venue are yet to be confirmed and will be announced in due course.



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## 4. Introduction of Think Visegrad in Brussels' Core Member Think-tanks:

Think Visegrad in Brussels is a platform for cooperation of eight core think-tanks, two from each of the Visegrad Countries. This newsletter and the subsequent issues will briefly introduce all of them, focusing primarily on their EU related activities.

### Slovak Foreign Policy Association (SFPA)

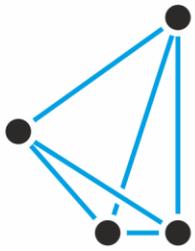
The Slovak Foreign Policy Association (SFPA) is the oldest Slovak foreign policy think-tank based in Bratislava, and the main coordinator of the [Think Visegrad](#), which is a network of think-tanks from the V4. Since 1993 its mission has been to conduct high-quality, independent research, to provide innovative practical recommendations for policy- and decision-makers and to stimulate the interest of the wider Slovak public in global events and the European Union.

One of the flagship projects of the SFPA is the 'National Convention on the EU' which has been so far implemented in seven Western Balkan and Eastern Partnership countries and waiting to be launched in others. It serves as a discussion forum on a national level, providing recommendations on EU policies to national representatives.

Currently the SFPA, together with the Representation of the European Commission in Bratislava co-organizes the series of 29 public debates on the EU and related issues called 'Café Európa'. Annually, the SFPA organizes an international conference on the state of the EU and by the end of the year, its biggest event – the Central European Energy Conference (CEEC). In 2016 the CEEC will be conjoined with the annual SET Plan conference.

The SFPA also produces periodical and non-periodical publications covering various areas of foreign policy and international relations, including the 'International Issues & Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs' quarterly.

For more information about the SFPA please visit [www.sfpa.sk](http://www.sfpa.sk).



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## The Society of the Institute of East-Central Europe

The Society of the Institute of East-Central Europe (TIESW) was established in 1991 and has been operating as an R&D centre associated with the Minister of Foreign Affairs since 2001. It is headquartered in Lublin, the biggest city in eastern Poland, and its staff is mainly composed of academics and graduates of the local universities.

TIESW engages in many academic-research projects, which aim at reinterpreting the image of history of East-Central Europe and its contemporary situation. The Institute's research work concentrates on history (creating new synthesis of the history of East-Central European countries in order to also understand the present problems), historical and cultural studies with focus on cultural minorities, and psychosociology.

Regarding the EU, TIESW pursues a research project identifying and exploring the V4's ideational stance and its impact on the V4's role vis-à-vis the European integration. It builds on the assumption that a shared ideational stance among the V4 exists, by upholding specific policy-fields such as economy, innovation/competitiveness/industrial policy, and examines the trajectory of its evolution throughout transition and transformation.

For more information please go to: <http://iesw.lublin.pl/towarzystwo/towarzystwo.php> (in Polish).



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