

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PRESENTS PRIORITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL VISEGRAD FUND

**Bratislava – On Tuesday, December 3, 2024, the new Executive Director of the International Visegrad Fund presented the organization's priorities at a meeting with journalists in Bratislava.**

The goal of Linda Kapustová Helbichová, a career diplomat, will be to support the establishment of partnerships among the countries of the Visegrad Group, the Western Balkans, and the Eastern Partnership, as well as to promote the mobility of young people, students, doctoral candidates, researchers, and artistic residencies. The Director's priority is also to provide information on efforts to expand the capacity of one of the seven programme priorities: support for innovation, research and development, and entrepreneurship.

The V4 countries occupy different positions in the Global Innovation Index (GII, WIPO) and the European Innovation Scoreboard. What they have in common is that all of them still have room to move forward and improve in terms of innovative excellence, human capacity building, information exchange, and the establishment of scientific and institutional partnerships. The International Visegrad Fund includes these areas among its project support objectives. The Director is naturally interested in women's issues and will strive to promote support for women at all available levels of project support.

It should also be noted that in 2025, the Visegrad Fund will celebrate its 25th anniversary. On this occasion, an award will be presented at a planned event for the best project, which will be selected through a public vote conducted over the course of the coming year.

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The International Visegrad Fund is an international organisation established by the governments of the Visegrad Group (V4) countries—Czechia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia in 2000. Its mission is to foster closer cooperation and mutual understanding among citizens within the V4 region, as well as between the V4 and other regions, such as the countries of the so-called Eastern Partnership countries and the Western Balkans. The Visegrad Fund contributes to the development of civil society by financing joint grant projects, awarding scholarships, and providing mobility opportunities for artists. Its annual budget of €10 million is equally funded by the governments of the V4 countries. To date, the Fund has supported almost 10,000 grant projects and individual mobility initiatives, with a total funding amount exceeding €130 million.

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