

Minutes

V4 Academies Forum in Smolenice, 23-24 April 2007

The representatives of the Academies of Sciences from the Visegrád - 4 countries (V4 Academies) met in Smolenice on 23-24 April 2007 at the invitation of the Slovak Academy of Sciences.

The debates were organized in accordance with the adopted programme (see enc. No. 2):

1/ European Science Foundation (ESF) after the Strasbourg General Assembly, Prof. F. Čiampor

Prof. Čiampor informed about the implementation of the ESF Strategic Plan for 2006-2010. The main strategic activities oriented on **streamlining** the ESF **instruments** are:

- **Science Strategy:** a key requirement – outputs of instruments (Forward Looks, á la carte Member Organisation Fora, Exploratory Workshops and Expert Boards and Committees) should have a visible impact on the funding of research across national boundaries;
- **Science Synergy:** by bringing together excellent scientists at all stages of their careers to fund those activities that fit their strategic priorities and interests (EUROCORES, ESF Research Networking Programmes and ESF Conferences);
- **Science Management:** the provision of services to ESF MOs (in particular to the EUROHORCS organizations) in the form of research programme management.

After the presentation the discussion turned to the ESF future existence, in particular, in terms of the Foundation's efficiency with emphasis on the administration and its numbers; the issue of intellectual property was also tackled.

2/ Preparation and implementation of the FP 7 in the V4 Countries including ERC, Prof. F. Čiampor, Dr A. Zsigmond, Prof. M. Kleiber and Dr J. Hrušák

The experiences of the V4 Academies in preparation and implementation of the FP7 (EU Seventh Framework Programme) for the years 2007-2013 were presented by Prof. F. Čiampor, Dr A. Zsigmond, Prof. M. Kleiber and Dr J. Hrušák.

It was agreed that it is important that we jointly face the problems of participation of researchers from V4 Academies in the FP7.

The joint declaration on the issue of the FP7 was approved by all the Academies of V4 (see the enclosure No. 3).

As the role of the ESF and the ERC is not identical, it is necessary for each Academy to make policy decisions which activities are to be supported according to their own preferences. The ESF is not a regular foundation, it only has networking function for institutes that rely on their own financial resources. On the other hand, the ERC, supported by the European Commission, is a genuine funding body for the ERC grants (the ERC Starting Independent Researchers Grants or the ERC Advanced Investigator Grants) of ca. € 7.8 bn over the period of FP7.

A complete information on the issue of the ERC was presented by Prof. M. Kleiber, a Member of the ERC Scientific Council in his presentation "European Research Council – a new element in the EU research policy?". The main

aim of the newly-established body is to stimulate **scientific excellence** by supporting and encouraging the very best, truly creative scientists, engineers and scholars to be adventurous and take risks in their research.

The ERC as the first pan-European funding body set up for supporting investigator-driven frontier research supports all areas of research with 100 % reimbursement of projects. It works on the principles: „attractive funding-flexible application procedures-excellence“ with a special attention to young researchers and its evaluation criteria for starting grants are: quality of research output, intellectual capacity and creativity, international reputation and independent leadership ability.

3/ Visegrád Academies Website, Prof. J. Palouš

Prof. J. Palouš, responsible for launching the Visegrád Academies website reported on the current state of the preparations and presented the experimental pilot version of the website (<http://v4.avcr.eu>). After a discussion of all participating Academies it has been decided about the essential information to be presented on the website: the logo (Visegrád Castle and flags of the V4 Academies), the title of the website (Visegrád group of Academies) and about the information concerning our co-operation which will be published on the website: history (all previous meetings), next meeting under preparation, joint declarations, actual issues and other events (*Young Researcher Awards* + regulations, CEJSH, joint activities, international summer schools, minutes from the meetings).

Contact points (name of persons responsible for presenting information including their contact details) of all V4 Academies (proposal) will be forwarded to Prof. J. Palouš.

4/ Young Researcher Award 2007 in Physical Sciences and Astronomy

Four successful young researchers from the Visegrád Academies – winners of the competition in their national academy – were awarded for the third time.

Prof. J. Slezák, after giving a short information on the history of the competition (the idea of establishing was first mentioned by the former President of the PAS Prof. A. Legocki on the PAS-SAS Presidia Meeting in Stará Lesná in 2004) introduced the awarded young researchers and their study works:

Radan Slavík (ASCR): *High-speed Signal Processing Using Optical Fiber-based Components*;

György Gyürky (HAS): *Nuclear astrophysics, studying the stars from the laboratory*;

Katarzyna Małek (PAS): *Pi of the Sky*;

Mário Ziman(SAS): *Quantum Information Science*

The award includes active participation in a top-level european scientific conference, the cost of which will be covered by the home Academy.

The field of competition for young researchers in 2008 will be “History, Archaeology and Ethnology”.

5/ After UK-V4 Frontiers of Science Meeting, Prof. A. Górski

The first symposium for young scientists based on the Frontiers of Science idea was organized by the PAS with the cooperation of the Royal Society and the support of other V4 Academies.

The Frontiers of Science (FoS) is a programme of meetings aimed at bringing together some of the very best young (aged 45 or under) scientists to discuss exciting advances and opportunities in their fields in a format that encourages

informal collective as well as one-on-one discussions among participants. The purpose is to bring together the best young researchers - the next generation of leaders - in science, in the UK and around the world and to explore new opportunities for collaboration. Future science leaders should get to know each other, and this is one way of achieving that. The meetings give participants the opportunity to forge new relationships.

The conference comprised **7 sessions** dealing with “hot” issues of multidisciplinary science (biology, physics, chemistry, mathematics, astronomy, life sciences), **2 poster sessions** (30 posters) and **1 session** devoted to possibilities of funding international joint projects. The number of participants was up to 100 - apart from the participants from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland and the UK, there were participating 5 observers from India, a country which will be a co-organizer, along with the Royal Society, of the next Frontiers of Science Symposium.

6/ *Between West and East: Four national narratives in Central Europe.*
Prof. J. Pánek

One of the common initiatives of the V4 Academies in the field of Social Sciences and Humanities is the preparation of a joint publication on history and historiography, which would clarify the position of the countries located between the West and East. The idea was initiated at the meeting of the SCH Core Group with representatives of the member organizations of the European Science Foundation that was held in Helsinki. According to Vaclav Panek and Przemysław Urbańczyk the rest of European nations have fairly little knowledge of Visegrád – 4 countries.

The publication project will be organized into nine chapters (all of them containing four individual monographs of each V4 country) addressing such topics as: the origin of the consolidation of states, the integration and disintegration, from the period of battle of Vienna to the formation of modern nation; democracy, autocracy up to the beginning of the Second World War, the Soviet regime and the new challenges. Each V4 country will have its own national editor: for the PAS Prof. P. Urbańczyk, for the SAS Dr D. Kováč, for the ASCR Prof. J. Pánek, for the HAS Dr A. Pók.

The publication will be finished in one and a half year. At the meeting the publishing was discussed. It was agreed to release all the four volumes in English and in the languages of all the participating countries.

7/ *The share of the Social Sciences and Humanities in the understanding of the developing processes in V4 countries.*
Dr D. Kováč, Dr Ľ. Falt'an

National and international research projects dealing with social processes and social change which were carried on in V4 countries need to increase their visibility. To this aim two meetings of experts were held:

- in Budapest on 11–12 December 2006
- in Bucharest on 17–18 April 2007

All that is challenge enough for creation of a common platform for V4 Academies activities aimed at the solving the situation.

It was agreed that the SAS (Dr D. Kováč and Dr Ľ. Falt'an) will organize the meeting of Vice Presidents responsible for the Social Sciences and the Humanities for the purpose of preparing a set of thematic workshops under the auspices of V4 Academies.

8/ World Science Forum 2007 „Investing in Science – Investing in the Future“
– participation of V4 Academies, Prof. A. Meskó

The World Science Forum 2007 will be held in Budapest from 8 to 10 November, 2007. The main topic of the event will be „*Investing in Science – Investing in the Future*“.

Prof. A. Meskó informed about preparations of the meeting and he introduced the thematic sessions:

- I. *Towards achievement of millennium development goals and the role of sciences*
- II. *Science and innovation as a global enterprise*
- III. *Investment in knowledge in our environment*
- IV. *Investments in knowledge in accelerating economies*
- V. *Investing in future generations*

The main intention of the Forum is to collect “important stakeholders” such as scientists, politicians, businessmen and decision-makers from all over the world and discuss the “hot” issues of science (among the invited guests there are European Presidents, the President of the European Commission, Mr J. M. Barroso, as well as the General Director of UNESCO Mr. K. Matsuura).

On behalf of the organizers of the *World Science Forum 2007* Prof. A. Meskó invited the Academies of V4 to participate considerably and actively in this important event.

Prof. Sylvester E. Vizi (HAS) invited representatives of the V4 Academies for the next Forum to be held in 2008 in Budapest.

3 enclosures: List of the participants of the Forum of the Visegrád Academies
Programme of the Forum of the Visegrád Academies
Declaration of the Forum of the Visegrád Academies