

Declaration of the V4 Conservative Political Academy

Strengthening Civic Education in the Visegrad Region

We the representatives of youth organisations from all four Visegrad countries who met in Bratislava to deliberate on the state of democracy in Europe in the framework of the V4 Conservative Political Academy,

Recognize

We recognize a growing trend among young voters for choosing extreme right parties in elections at local, national and European level.

We recognize that authoritarian regimes and non-state actors are waging a hybrid war against Europe and its allies and friends to which we have failed thus far to provide an adequate response, particularly in strategic communication and cyber defense.

We observe alarming trends among the young generation in Central Europe, which include the fact that only 32% of the youth in V4 countries think positively about their future; 70% believe that politicians do not listen to the needs and ideas of young people; 51% of the youth regularly use the so-called alternative media while 34% consider them as credible sources of information. As a result, 48,5% of the youth call for change in their countries.¹

We recognize civic education as a key element for preserving freedom, democracy, economic growth and stability. Moreover, civic education is essential for strengthening resilience against disinformation, propaganda and other forms of hostile influence.

Call for action

We challenge Millennials and Generation Z to use our voices to influence change, both within and beyond our own generation.

We call for more action by national governments in the Visegrad Four to resist the temptation of populism and combat extremism via civic education, which must include critical thinking, media literacy and the promotion of the values of a free society.

We call on governments and civil society organisations to join forces in fighting fake news, disinformation and propaganda.

We call on political leaders and civil society actors to stand up for European values and promote the continued vitality and enlargement of the European Union and NATO, as well as to assist the democratic actors working toward these goals in Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia and the Western Balkans.

¹ The Beacon Project's public opinion research, run by the International Republican Institute, March 2017.



Take a commitment

We are committed to proving that Visegrad cooperation has a vital role in the world today.

We will work together among the youth in our countries in order to bring solutions in areas of common interest and to become examples of good cooperation for others.

In Bratislava, 25. November 2017

Supported by participants of V4 Conservative Youth Political Academy:

Christian Democratic Youth of Slovakia, (KDMS), official youth of KDH, Slovak Republic,

Fidelitas, official youth of Fidesz, Hungary

Young Christian Democrats, (MKD), official youth of KDU-ČSL, Czech Republic

Youth of People's Party, (ML), official youth of KDU-ČSL, Czech Republic

TOP Tým, official youth of TOP09 Czech Republic