

A group of students are seated around a table on an outdoor patio, engaged in a discussion. They are wearing blue lanyards. The background shows lush green trees. The scene is viewed through a window frame.

VISE GRAD
SUMMER SCHOOL



ATMOSPHERE

The Visegrad Summer School is a two-week educational programme which provides an interdisciplinary learning space for young Czech, Hungarian, Polish and Slovak students, and for their peers from other Central and Eastern European countries.

The School session takes place at Villa Decius, a restored 16th-century Renaissance palace surrounded by a beautiful park in Cracow. The environment and the special spirit of Villa Decius stimulate serious discussion and exchange of experiences. Lively cultural and social events complement the academic side of the programme.

The atmosphere during the two weeks of School activities is as diverse as its participants: from intense debate to informal conversation, from bursts of creativity to the quiet satisfaction of accomplishment.





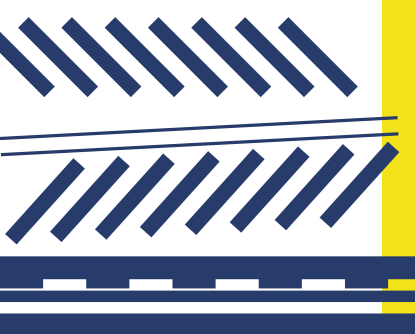


LECTURES and DEBATES



The Visegrad Summer School programme consists of lectures, panel debates and seminars on issues and challenges relevant to the Visegrad Group region, the European Union and beyond.

The topics cover current social, economic, political and cultural issues, such as multiculturalism, economic transition in Central and Eastern European countries, relations between the EU and other countries, and European and national cultural identity and heritage. European experts from cultural, academic, business, nongovernmental and political fields give lectures, participate in the debates, and make themselves available for questions and individual discussions with students.





PEOPLE in ACTION

Students, graduates, PhD researchers, young journalists and teachers are the participants in the School. Workshops that bring together people from many countries develop joint projects and creative ideas. These activities supplement the programme, encouraging integration and dialogue; they foster cooperation between individuals and, in the longer term, between their countries.







Diary Logue

▶ It's essential for young students from different countries to have an occasion to meet. During the Summer School we have a chance to discuss the political issues relevant to our countries, as well as to learn the principles of integration. [Ondrej Gallo, Slovakia, VSS 2002]

▶ **Here I got acquainted with important politicians, and made good friends. It was here that I developed an idea for my master's thesis, later awarded with a distinction. [Dominika Kasprowicz, Poland, participant in the first edition of the VSS, and now co-organizer]**

▶ I really enjoyed all the cultural evenings. I think all of them were very lively and exciting. In my opinion, the VSS is a very successful and brilliant event. I think that I got even more out of the school than I had expected. [Kateryna Bodnar, Ukraine, VSS 2007]

▶ We take an interest in the careers of our students. Some are now employed by EU institutions, NGOs and public administration, and others are following academic careers. But what unites them all now is friendship, shared experience, and memories of being and learning together. [Danuta Glondys, Director of the Villa Decius Association, 2006]



▶ For a long time we have been aware that higher education alone will not open the way forward if a person does not have at least this one skill: to communicate with people of different nationalities, different cultures, and speaking different languages. This school is a place where young people from neighbouring states have a chance to get to know each other in the course of their work. It is a wonderful investment in the Visegrad lobby. [Rafał Wiśniewski, Polish Ambassador to Hungary, 2003]





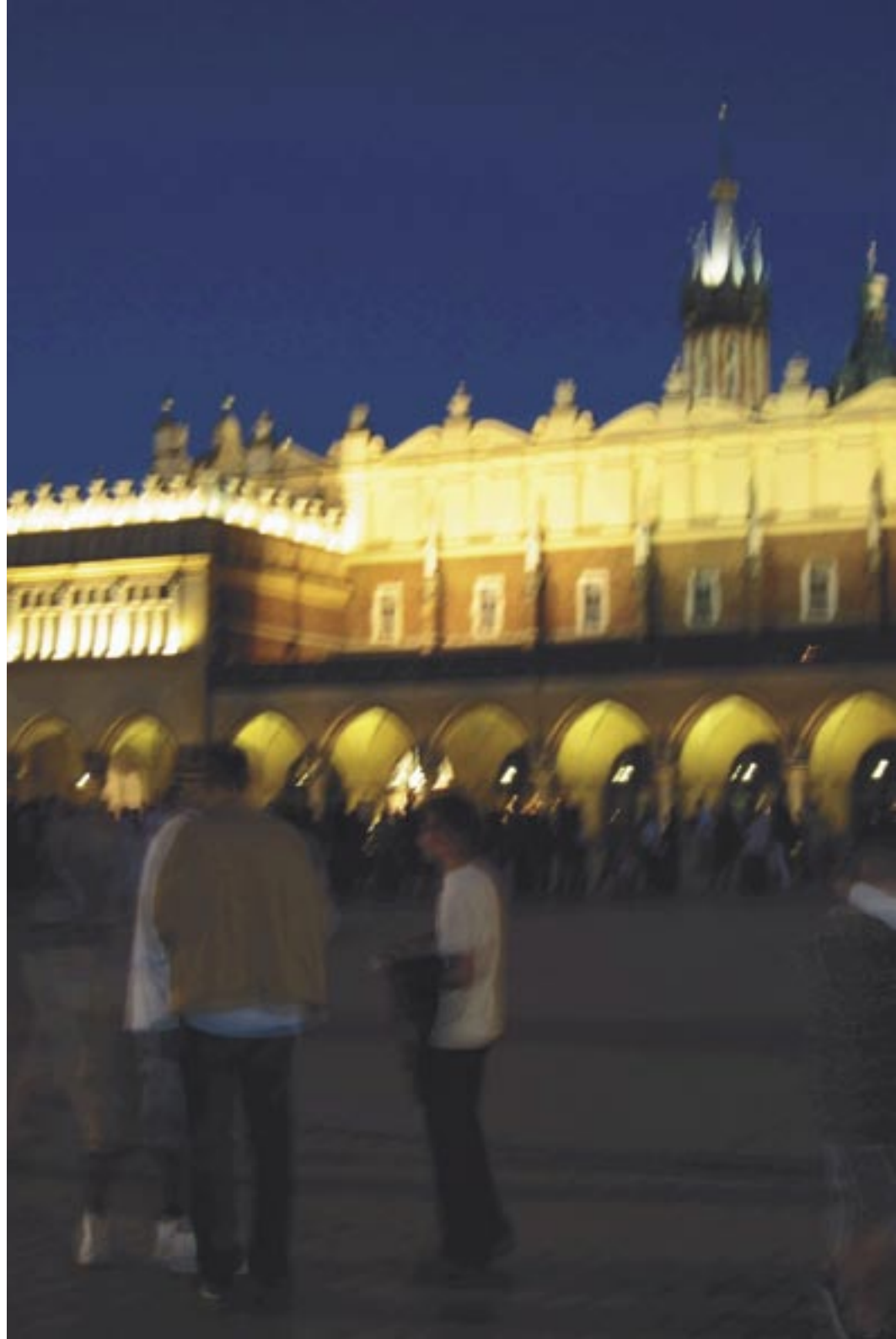


IDENTITIES

Because the Visegrad Summer School is an international initiative, it provides a forum for interpreting cultural identity and for reflecting on its construction, essential elements and characteristics. The School is where students can search for their regional and European roots, challenge persistent stereotypes, and *touch* and *taste* a different culture.

School participants from Visegrad Group states and from countries such as Armenia, Belarus, Germany, France, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Romania, Russia and Ukraine create a real *melting pot*.





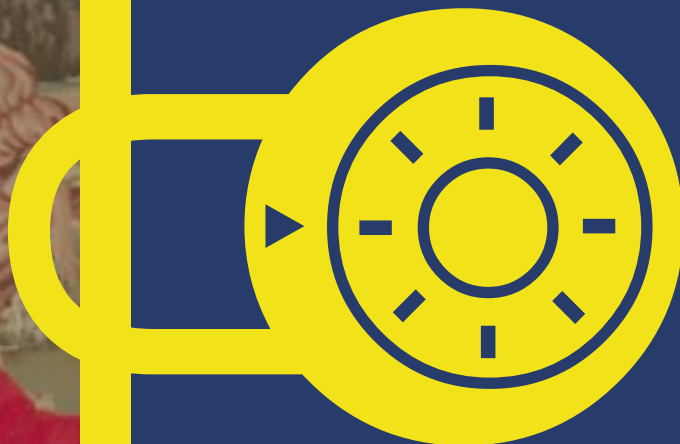


more CULTURE

Informal cultural evenings are prepared by Visegrad Summer School participants, who represent their different countries. These are times when everybody can learn more about a country's cultural heritage, practice national dances, try national delicacies, and take part in quizzes and competitions. Over the weekend there is a chance to see more of Cracow and participate in unconventional study tours. Trips outside of the city are meant to introduce the landscapes and sites of Central Europe to the visitors.

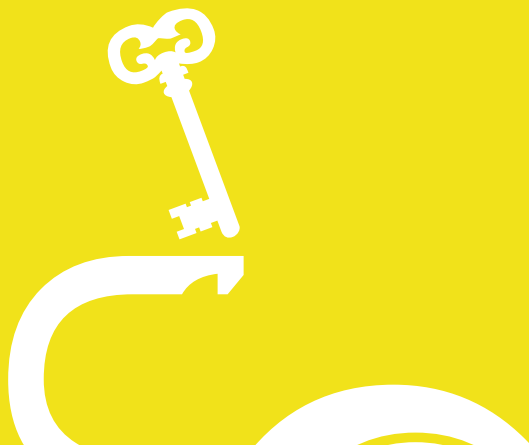






TeAm

The Visegrad Summer School is prepared in close cooperation with partners from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Ukraine, and managed by the Villa Decius Association team. An international team of volunteers assist the staff.



The Visegrad Summer School is a Villa Decius
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• **Visegrad Fund**

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