

The International, Foreign and Social Policies of the V4

The structure of the semester

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- What is the V4? Does it have common policies? - February 11
 - Hungary – February 25
 - Czech Republic – March 11
 - Slovakia – March 25
 - Poland – April 15
 - Geopolitics and the V4 – April 29
 - Final Exam – May 13

What is the V4?

- A cultural and political alliance of four countries (Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland)
- Founded: February 15, 1991
- Aim: to foster cooperation in areas of shared interest, including military cooperation, economic development, cultural, scientific, and educational exchanges, as well as energy security
- It is a forum to coordinate positions within the EU and NATO
- All four countries joined the EU at the same time: May 1, 2004
- Only Slovakia is member of the Eurozone
- The group carries more weight as an alliance than they would as individual countries
- Each year a different member of the group takes over the presidency – currently Hungary

Do the V4 countries have common policies?

- No – but they do have strategic priorities
- They are announced by the country serving as President of the group
- The group gives grants in connection to these topics
- **The 2026 priorities are:**
- **V4@35:** projects emphasizing the importance of strengthening links between the societies of the V4 countries in the context of the V4's 35th anniversary, special emphasis on youth born after the EU and Schengen accession. Focus on academic mobility, joint educational platforms, and on what the V4 should look like in the future

2026 priorities continued

- **Smart and sustainable cities:** Strengthening cross-border partnerships, connecting local governments, civil society, startups, and academia to promote innovative solutions. Initiatives aimed at efficient use of energy, transportation, water resources, emission reduction, and environmental protection
- **Facilitating research and development in the region:** promoting regional R&D collaborations among V4 countries, Eastern Partnership, and Western Balkan countries
- Source: <https://www.visegradfund.org/news/strategic-priorities-2026-set/>

Examples of political cooperation

- 2015: European immigration crisis – V4 countries successfully blocked EU actions aimed at forced relocation of illegal immigrants within the EU
- EU stated proceedings against Poland and Hungary at the time, V4 split politically (2+2)
- Poland and Czech Republic on one team, Hungary and Slovakia on the other
- Divergent political views currently hinder V4 cooperation on security and integration
- There haven't been any V4 summits in 2025
- Main issue is the Ukrainian-Russian war & energy and Hungary and Slovakia's opposition to further European integration
- As a result the V4 faces diminishing influence

Source: <https://www.gisreportsonline.com/r/the-v4/>

	Head of government	In power since	Political leaning of government	Stance on Russia	Stance on EU
Czech Republic (2021-2025)	Petr Fiala	2021	Centre-right coalition	Critical	Positive
Czech Republic Dec 2025	Andrej Babis	2025	Pragmatic populist	Less critical	Eurosceptic tendencies
Hungary	Viktor Orbán	2010	Right wing nationalist: illiberal	Accommodating	Eurosceptic
Poland	Donald Tusk	2023	Liberal-centrist coalition	Critical	Positive
Slovakia	Robert Fico	2023	Left-populist with right-wing nationalist elements: illiberal	Accommodating	Eurosceptic