

Joint Declaration of Intent of Prime Ministers of the Visegrad Group on Mutual Co-operation in Innovation and Digital Affairs

"Warsaw Declaration" adopted at the CEE Innovators Summit in Warsaw on March 28, 2017

We, the Prime Ministers of the Visegrad Group (V4) countries, convening in Warsaw on 28 March 2017, adopt hereby the following Joint Declaration.

RECOGNIZING the solid ties of cooperation and friendship between the Czech Republic, Hungary, the Republic of Poland and the Slovak Republic, and the remarkable progress in our relations in various areas reached, among others, thanks to the V4 cooperation;

REITERATING the commitment of the V4 countries to provide added value for the reflexion process on the future of the EU in specific areas;

RECALLING the Kroměříž Declaration of 12 May 2004 on cooperation of the Visegrad Group countries after their accession to the European Union^[1], as well as the recent meetings held within the framework of the Polish Presidency of the Visegrad Group: the meeting of ministers responsible for cohesion policy and the economy of the V4 countries of 14 July 2016 and the meeting of ministers responsible for telecommunications and heads of the National Regulatory Authorities of V4 countries on 6 February 2017, who adopted the common paper on the European Electronic Communications Code;

REITERATING the commitments made in the Memorandum of Understanding on a "Regional Start-up Platform" between start-up organizations of the start-up communities and in the Memorandum of Understanding on enterprises in Eastern Central Europe for digitalization and connected and automated driving, signed at the Regional Digital Summit held in Budapest on 17–18 November 2016;

EMPHASIZING the necessity of seeking sustainable development through advancing cooperation in the field of modernisation of the V4 national economies with respect to entrepreneurship, research and innovation, digital affairs, implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy, establishing institutions resistant to political and economic crisis, securing safety and adequate standards of living;

NOTING that the world economy is rapidly becoming digital and data driven; that growing use of and investment in digital technologies and knowledge-based human capital is profoundly transforming our societies and that innovation is easier when data can flow safely, freely, preserving the credibility and integrity of data across borders; and that the opportunities beyond own borders of the EU should be explored. Adequate protection of personal data shall be secured and the existing and future EU legal framework for the protection of personal data shall not, however, be subject of negotiations of the trade agreements, but rather dealt with separately through other available instruments (e.g. adequacy findings);

NOTING that we should include and reflect on national security related exceptions in the current discussions on data localisation while guaranteeing free flow of data;

STRESSING that efforts should be made to establish a full-fledged and connected European Digital Single Market in which the free movement of goods, persons, services, personal data and capital is ensured and where individuals and businesses can seamlessly access and exercise online activities under conditions of fair competition, and a high level of consumer and personal data protection, irrespective of their nationality or place of residence;

UNDERLINING that advancing our vision relies on the participation of all countries and on joint action to seize the opportunities and tackle the evolving challenges of innovation economies becoming digital and that of reducing market fragmentation.

The Visegrad Group agrees to further strengthen its ties by adopting the following Warsaw Declaration on mutual co-operation in research, innovation and digital affairs as follows:

- promote internationally the Visegrad region as a research and innovation hub, cooperating in areas where mutual interests can be identified;
- to deepen the existing cooperation in research, technology, innovation and digital affairs, particularly with the use of

EU funds;

- to share the best practices and expertise to generate successful innovation and business models;
- to promote and publicly present the most successful innovative projects which were supported by R&D&I programmes;
- to cooperate in the process of frequency allocation in order to gain competitive advantage for the V4 region in the preparation for the next generation mobile services (5G);
- reinvigorate the cooperation within the V4 Innovation Task Force through continued regular meetings on different focus themes, rendering it an effective institutional tool aimed at creating a solid basis for enhanced joint endeavours in the field of research and innovation;
- emphasize activities of the V4-Plus “Regional Start-up Platform”, and to focus on innovation management and knowledge sharing in the field of IP services provided by National IP Offices, and by the Visegrad Patent Institute;
- provide opportunities to strengthen and expand regional innovation clusters and foster the innovation and/or digital ecosystems within the framework of existing national and EU funding mechanisms and for joint research, development and innovation projects to access to capital and more rapid and effective commercialization of technology;
- to facilitate joint V4 research, development and innovation projects inter alia by dedicating a special budget line in the International Visegrad Fund for R&D&I-related grants available to the scientific and business community;
- to secure transformation of innovative start-ups into successful businesses by leveraging capital, knowledge and networks and make joint efforts to promote V4 innovative start-ups at international level;
- support SMEs in adoption of innovation, digital technologies and taking part in Industry 4.0 projects;
- to support programmes at regional and national levels aimed at increasing ICT and digital skills in all groups of people at all educational level;
- to secure the adoption of digital technologies and services in order to support the data economy at national and regional levels;
- to improve the quality and affordability of ICT infrastructure, products and services through investment and fair and transparent policy and legal frameworks that encourage competition;
- to work towards sustainable, efficient, resilient and secure cyber space based, inter alia, on timely and proper implementation of the NIS Directive, allowing the joint internal market for the high level cyber security and protection of critical information infrastructures and resources;
- to address unjustified barriers to free flow of data such as data localisation that throttle economies of scale and thwart the growth of V4-based companies that should compete globally;
- to cooperate closely on reviewing the rules regulating the electronic communications market and confirm that main interest of our countries is to create clear unambiguous and future proof rules which will give legal certainty to all providers and users of electronic communication networks and digital services;
- to develop policy frameworks that further promote effective privacy and data protection;
- to emphasize the need to coordinate actions aimed at boosting competitiveness, innovativeness and digital transformation of V4 countries and to coordinate positions at EU level with respect to research and innovation and agree to meet regularly to advance progress in this field.

Signed in Warsaw, on 28th March 2017

Prime Minister of the Czech Republic
Prime Minister of Hungary
Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland
Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic

[1] <http://www.visegradgroup.eu/2004/declaration-of-prime>