



Central European Perspectives on the Future of Europe

An Austro-French Dialogue with the Visegrad states

Part I : Slovakia, the Visegrad Four and the European Union

14 December 2020, 9.00 – 10.00 am CET

Zoom

Coordination

Austro-French Centre for Rapprochement in Europe (ÖFZ/CFA), Vienna
Institut Montaigne, Paris

In cooperation with

Globsec Policy Institute, Bratislava
The Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM), Warsaw (tbc)
EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy, Prague
Institute for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Budapest

Context and objectives

The manifold crises that have affected the European Union in the past ten years have strained the ambition of an ever-closer Union playing a leading role in global politics. After the economic and migration crises, Brexit and rising instability in the EU's neighbourhood, the EU is now confronted with an unprecedented pandemic and the return of geopolitics. The need for concerted action guided by a common vision is as pressing as ever. The Conference on the Future of Europe is accordingly intended to reinforce the Union in its plurality of perspectives.

The objective of this series of four Webinars is to shed light on perspectives from Central Europe; to examine, more specifically, how the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia view the role of the Visegrad Four in tomorrow's Europe and how their visions for the future of Europe intersect with French and Austrian perspectives in a post-pandemic world.

The first webinar is devoted to the Slovakian point of view and will assess the impact of the pandemic on EU cohesion and Slovakia's expectations for the Future of Europe Conference. It will also address the pressing question of the respect of rule of law and its link to the EU budget and the European Recovery Fund.

Introductory remarks

- **Hans Dietmar SCHWEISGUT**, Secretary General, Austro-French Centre for Rapprochement in Europe, Vienna

Speakers

- **David CVACH**, Director for European Affairs, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Paris
- **Stefan LEHNE**, Visiting Scholar, Carnegie Europe, Brussels
- **Tomáš STRÁŽAY**, Director of the Research Center, Slovak Foreign Policy Association, Bratislava

Moderation

- **Vladislava GUBALOVA**, Future of Europe Programme, GLOBSEC Policy Institute, Bratislava