



Civil servants mobility program 2017

Poland	5 – 11 November 2017 and 28 January – 3 February 2018
Hungary	19 – 24 November 2017 and 11 – 17 February 2018
Czech Republic	19 – 25 November 2017 and 12 – 17 March 2018
Slovakia	10 – 15 December 2017 and 29 January – 2 February 2018

Report

By definition, the Civil Servants Mobility Program (CSMP) is the project of the Think Visegrad Think Tank Platform that aims to educate civil servants from Eastern Partnership and Western Balkan countries through organizing study visits in the V4 countries. The study visits focus on the past experience of Visegrad countries on the implementation of the sectoral reforms and harmonization of the national legislation with the EU legislation.

The Civil Servants Mobility Program 2017 was divided in two parts hosting **26 participants from Ukraine** and **12 participants from Serbia**. Ukraine has been in the focus of the CSMP since the very beginning of its existence, but Serbia – and more generally the Western Balkans – was included in the program for the first time in 2017. The ability to respond adequately to the needs of different groups of civil servants from both Eastern Partnership and Western Balkan countries proves the flexibility of the Think Visegrad platform, which was also demonstrated on a different thematic focus of each group of civil servants.

As for **Ukrainian civil servants**, the group in Warsaw focused on practical experience in attracting and servicing foreign investors in Poland and supporting innovation and modern technologies development projects at various levels. The group in Budapest focused on city development, rehabilitation and urban planning, while the main focus of the group in the Czech Republic was on the possibility to implement key elements of the Czech school system in the current reform of the Ukrainian educational system. Finally, the group in Bratislava aimed to discuss the issues related to security sector reform with focus on combating corruption, disinformation and political extremism,

As regards **Serbian civil servants**, the group in Bratislava focused on the security sector reform in the process of the EU accession and the one in Warsaw on experience in the area of cross-border co-operation. The focus of the group in Budapest was Euro-Atlantic integration, while Serbian civil servants in Prague focused on renewable sources of energy

Part I: Ukraine

Warsaw, 5 – 11 November 2017

Participants: **Veronika Balbuza**, Volyn Regional State Administration, **Natalia Hudok** Chernihiv Regional State Administration, **Artem Sachuk**, Zhytomyr Regional State Administration, **Tetiana Shulichenko**, Mykolayiv City Council, **Olha Syvak**, Lviv City Council, **Iryna Viter**, Ternopil Regional State Administration.

The study visit in Poland was organized by the Center for Eastern Studies in cooperation with the Polish Institute of International Affairs. During their stay Ukrainian experts visited Warsaw, Wrocław, Legnica and Jawor. The purpose of the visit was to provide Ukrainian local authorities with practical experience in attracting and servicing foreign investors in Poland and supporting innovation and modern technologies development projects at various levels. These include domestic institutions, regional institutions and individual municipalities, which have been successful in attracting investors. As an example, the Lower Silesian Voivodship has been selected, which is the leader in attracting foreign investment in Poland.

Particularly interesting for participants from Ukraine were models of cooperation between institutions at the national and regional level, including the formula of agreements concluded by the Polish Investment and Trade Agency (PAIH) with all regions in Poland. Important for the Ukrainian side were also the investor service standards, forms for inquiries and information provision as well as confidentiality rules in the cooperation between the public and private entities. During the meetings at PAIH, the Polish Development Fund and the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development, the possibilities of using financial instruments and EU support for Polish-Ukrainian cooperation available in Poland were also discussed. The meeting at the OSW (with representatives of the Ukrainian Embassy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Development) concerned current issues of economic and interregional cooperation and its institutional support. The conversation at PISM was focused on the analysis of cooperation between Polish and Ukrainian local governments.

The trip to Wrocław included a visit to the City Hall and meetings with regional PAIH partners - the Agglomeration Development Agency and the Lower Silesian Agency for Economic Cooperation. During the visit to the Wrocław Technology Park (the largest park of this type in Poland), activities related to the incubation of companies, operation of laboratories and the Nutibiomed cluster were presented. The cluster brings together nearly 100 companies from all over Poland and is coordinated by the WPT. There was also a visit to the 3M research and development department and Saule laboratories. The group also made a stop at the Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic (consul Arkadiusz Ignasiak has expertise with investment consulting), the Legnica Special Economic Zone and got acquainted with the conditions of tax concessions offered in the zone as well as related planned legislative changes in Poland.

The last point of the study visit was the city of Jawor, which recently acquired the investment of the Daimler AG concern in the Mercedes engine factory worth 500,000.00 EUR, generating 500 jobs.

Budapest 19 – 24 November 2017

Participants¹: **Ruslan Negoda**, Advisor to the Mayor on Housing Policy, Cherkasy, **Ivan Pastuhov**, Deputy Director of the Housing Department of Kyiv City State Administration, Kyiv, **Yuriy Kras**, Director of the Department of Housing and Communal Services of the Lutsk City Council, Luck, **Neonila Polonchak**, Head of Operations Department of the Executive Committee of the Mukachevo City Council, Mukachevo, **Roman Nekhoroshkov**, Head of the Department for Housing of the Kharkiv City Administration, Kharkiv, **Ivanka Gavrylko**, Leading Specialist of the Energy Saving Program Implementation Department of the Energy Saving Department of the Fuel and Energy Department of Lviv Oblast Administration, Lviv, **Oleksandra Gumeniuk**, coordinator of the study trip, Project Manager of NGO Good Deeds, Kyiv, Ukraine, Kyiv, **Julia Samoilo**, Head of the Association of homeowners, Kharkiv.

The main focus of the study trip in Hungary was to learn and experience **city development, rehabilitation and urban planning**. Experts from major Ukrainian cities visited Budapest City Hall, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Center for Budapest Transportation, City Hall of Jozsefvaros, Habitat for Humanity Hungary, Budapest City Administration Holding Company, Janos Neumann University in the city of Kecskemet. The program took place between 19th-24th November, 2017, with the help of the Ukrainian NGO “Good Deeds”.

The official working program for the expert group was organized into five days and combined various meetings in order for the Ukrainian delegation to make acquaintance of the institutional framework and the governance in the field of infrastructure, urban development and housing. The program of the study trip consisted of a series of meetings with leading representatives and experts.

The first day of the program was opened at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The group met with **András Máté Lázár** the Head of the Secretariat of the Coordination of Hungary Visegrad Group and received a general introduction of Hungarian support to Ukraine interest and other levels of cooperation between the countries.

The second day of the program started at Budapest City Hall with **Balázs Szeneczey** the Deputy Major of Budapest, **Tamás Gonczlikt** the Chief Specialist of the Energy Efficiency Department of the Budapest City Council and **Máté Szűcs** the Chief Specialist at the Department of Urban Development. The topics discussed were general information about Budapest, energy efficiency of Budapest and Urban long term development strategy to 2030. In the afternoon, the group went to the Transport Municipal Company and met with Dr. **Denke** the Senior Public Transport Expert and **Tamás Kajdon** at the Department of International relations of BKK. The discussion revolved around the public transport system in Budapest.

On the third day of the official delegation visit, the group visited the local municipality of Budapest and learned about the rehabilitation of the locality and other key projects. The day began at the City Hall of Józsefváros with **György Alföldi** the Chief Engineer of the Municipal Engineering and Architectural Company REV8 and **Zsolt Szikszai** the Director of the Municipal Engineering and the Architectural Company REV8. Here, the group was introduced to the concept of a successful

¹ The group consisted of 8 participants, while the group coordinator was the interpreter for the group, so his cost were covered under the interpretation fee and the eighth person paid all costs for herself.

rehabilitation known as “The Corvin-negyed”. Later that day the group visited Habitat for Humanity in Hungary to learn more about the developments in social housing.

Meetings on the fourth day started at the Budapest City Hall and covered the operation of Municipality Owned Enterprises of Budapest with **Ervin Nemesdi**, CFO, BVH Zrt. The meeting covered successful holding management of the municipal enterprises and the problem of the efficient management of municipal companies. The group then went to the Budapest City Hall to speak with Főtáv Zrt regarding the operation and modernization of the Budapest District Heating Works. During the meeting the group learned about the development strategy of central heating system in Budapest.

The final day of the program continued by meeting with representatives of the city of Kecskemét. The group received a short introduction of development programs and economic development of the city of Kecskemét and an introduction of the biggest campus development of Hungary with the site visit at the campus development of János Neumann University with **Szabolcs Szemerey**. This meeting was held also held with the Executive Director of Kedo Engineering and Construction Company.

Feedback: In overall, the program and the meetings received very positive feedback from all the Ukrainian experts. The group actively engaged in debates, posed very concrete and practical questions and expressed their will to continue in the cooperation in future. We plan to continue the dissemination of the results of the study trip with the exchange of experience inside Ukraine.

Report of the trip in Ukrainian :

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1VHMrh9nT7jo5pKUvbfmqdpo87bFtx0DBCxcgilTEjOc/e dit?usp=sharing>

Photos of the program are accessible through our flickr account
(<https://www.flickr.com/photos/128462686@N02>)

Prague, 19 – 25 November 2017

Participants: **Burdun Svitlana**, Director of Illinivska Specialized School of I-III Degrees of Konstantinovsky District Council of Donetsk Region, **Kogut Olga**, Director of the secondary school of the I-III grades № 3 of Vugldarska city council of Donetsk region, **Meleshko Liliia**, Director of the Bilbasyvska secondary school of the I-III grades of the Slavyansk district council of Donetsk region, **Tomchuk Svitlana**, Director of the educational complex Specialized school of I-III degrees №4 with in-depth study of certain subjects - pre-school educational institution" of the Dobropol city council of Donetsk region, **Rovytska Natalia**, Director of the Municipal Institution "Mariupol Specialized School of I-III degrees №66 of Mariupol City Council of Donetsk Region" , **Pashchenko Kateryna**, Director of the comprehensive school of I-III degrees № 9 of the Pokrovsk city council of Donetsk region.

EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy organized another edition of the Civil Servant Mobility Program study trip for Ukrainian participants from November 19 to November 25, 2017. The main focus was on introducing the key elements of the Czech school system with the main focus placed on finding the common elements which could help with the implementation of the current reform of the Ukrainian educational system. The group consisted of six directors of

schools from the Donetsk region. The program was planned on the basis on previous successful programs on a similar topic, realized in previous years, and was adjusted to the guests' profiles.

The program consisted of many meetings and on-site visits of the schools. The program started by a guided tour of Prague on Sunday afternoon which was followed by welcome dinner on evening. On Monday **Jana Straková**, researcher at the Centre of research and development of education of Charles University in Prague, introduced the Czech system of education. In the afternoon, the group visited **Vladislava Cufalová** of the Czech School Inspection and discussed its role in controlling the quality of the Czech schools and teachers and the means available to its workers.

On Tuesday, group visited **Senator Václav Hampl** the former rector of Charles University and current chairperson of the Committee on EU affairs. Senator Hampl visited Ukraine during the autumn and also paid visit to some schools in the Donetsk region and wished to follow up the situation of the schools in the region more closely. The focus of the discussion was mainly on the reforms of the educational system which have been implemented in the Czech Republic since the revolution in 1989.

In the afternoon, **Ingrid Vavřínková** of the regional government of central Bohemia introduced its role. More in-depth discussion about the problems of the financing linked with the optimization of the capacity of the schools followed. The last point of the program on Tuesday was a visit in the Elementary Art school Na Popelce, whose director **Tomáš Krejbich** showed the group its premises and introduced the school activities.

The whole Wednesday morning was dedicated to the visit of the Bohumil Hrabal's high school. The visit started by the discussion with the school's director **Jiří Kuhn**, focused mainly on the ways how to motivate pupils in their studies. The group of directors had later the opportunity to see the lessons of Math, Chemistry and Social sciences and also talk with the students. The visit was closed by a lunch in the school canteen, which was appreciated by all directors. The program continued by the visit of the sights in Kutná hora, in accordance with the wish of our guests.

Libor Bezděk took the floor on Thursday morning and introduced the concept of the Youth centres in general and activities of the Prague's Youth Centre in particular. The group could see all the classes in the main building of the centre including the small theatre, ceramic workshop or music rooms. The afternoon program started with the visit of Secondary technical and vocational school Zelený Pruh and meeting with its deputy director **Danuše Černá** who introduced the main tracks of the school and also mentioned the opportunity for the Ukrainians pupils at her school including the possibilities of scholarships. The directors also had the opportunity to see the workshops for various vocations including welders, plumbers or heating engineers. The day was closed up with the visit at the ministry of education and discussion with the head of the department of elementary education **Svatopluk Pohořelý**.

On Friday morning, group met with **Vladislava Macků** of the Czech Society for Inclusive Education. The group of directors had many questions on Mrs. Macků and was very interested in different ways how to include disabled pupils in the common study groups. The whole programme was concluded by the meeting with **Dita Výborová**, the head of the department of education of the Municipality Prague 7 and also some of the school directors of its quarter. The group was satisfied to be able to discuss the problems of the management of schools with their Czech colleagues. -

Feedback: According to the evaluations, all guests were highly satisfied with both the relevance and content of the meetings –on the scale from 5 to 1 (5-excellent, 1-unsatisfactory) most of the meetings were evaluated with 5 in both categories. The average of an overall mark on the meetings scored between 4, 6 and 5. The program as a whole was awarded with the highest mark in all cases. Our guests also appreciated the accommodation (5) and accompanying program, such as the

welcome dinner and guided tour and were very satisfied with the choice of hotel and restaurants. Organizers and translator also received excellent feedback (5+).

Bratislava, 10 – 15 December 2017

Participants: **Marija Volodymyrivna Burdeyna**, Prosecutor, Control Department, Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine; **Ruslan Fufalko**, First Deputy Director, International Cooperation and European Integration Department, Ministry of Interior of Ukraine; **Dmytro Mikhailovich Miskiv**, Deputy Head, Internal Security Section, General Inspection, Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine; **Dmytro Petrov**, Deputy Head, International Legal Cooperation, Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine; **Ivan Varchenko**, Adviser to Minister, Ministry of Interior of Ukraine; **Serhiy Zhytniak**, First Deputy Director, Subordinated Authorities and Control Department, Ministry of Interior of Ukraine.

The main focus of the study trip of six civil servants in Slovakia was the security sector reform with focus on combating corruption, disinformation and political extremism, which was the topic selected by Ukrainian partners in cooperation with the Embassy of Slovak Republic in Ukraine.

The official working program for the expert group was organized into five days and combined various meetings in order for the Ukrainian delegation to make acquaintance of the institutional framework and the governance in the field, reform experiences and the current activities of the respective institutions, including their competencies and interaction. The program of the study trip consisted of a series of meetings with leading representatives and experts of the Slovak institutions that are part of the security sector of the Slovak Republic in the area of justice and fight against the corruption, political extremism and disinformation.

The first day of the programme was opened at RC SFPa where the group was officially received by **Tomáš Strážay**, Deputy Director of RC SFPa and was followed by the meeting at the Office of the Government of SR where delegation met with **Peter Kovařík**, Director of the Corruption Prevention Section and **Andrej Fatyka**, Director of OLAF Contact Unit. The main focus of the meeting was to introduce Governments perspective on the corruption in Slovakia and explain its role in fighting corruption. In the afternoon participants were also introduced on the view of the NGO sector. They met with **Pavol Sibyla**, Executive Director of the Let Us Stop Corruption Foundation who informed them about current situation with the corruption in Slovakia, their activities and legislation in the field of protection of whistle-blowers.

The second day of the programme started at the National Council of the Slovak Republic where Ukrainian delegation met with **Eubomír Galko**, Chairman of the National Security Authority Oversight Special Committee and **Gábor Grendel**, Chairman of the Slovak Intelligence Service Oversight Special Committee. The program continued at the Specialized Criminal Court of SR in Pezinok together with its Chairman **Michal Truban**. The afternoon session was dedicated to meetings with representatives of the Police Corps of SR and the delegation met with **Eubomír Ábel**, Vice President of PC SR, and representatives of the National Crime Agency, namely **Martin Fritz** and **Jozef Čegiň**, Deputy Directors of the National Anticorruption Unit, and **Hana Šebová**, Head of the Extremism Screening Centre of the National Antiterrorist Unit. Very active discussion included sharing of practical experiences from both sides and by participants was rated as one of the most interesting meetings.

On the third day of the official program the delegation visited Control and Inspection Section of the Ministry of Interior, where they were received by **Kristian Palík** who presented Slovak experience in procedures of the internal inspection with the Police Corps of the SR. The meetings continued at the RC SFPA where the group was officially received by **Alexander Duleba**, Director of RC SFPA. The afternoon meetings were held again in Pezinok at Special Prosecutors Office of the General Prosecutor, where **Vladimír Kurucz** together with his colleagues explained the role of the office in fight against corruption and political extremism.

Meetings of the fourth day started at Judicial Council of SR where delegation met **Patricia Némethová**. Both sides discussed the role of judiciary in fight against corruption, internal disciplinary procedures in Slovakia and compared overall institutional framework in Slovakia and Ukraine. The following meeting was with **Vladimír Tóth**, Vice-President of the Supreme Audit Office of the Slovak Republic. The last meeting with **Jaroslav Nad’**, Director of the Slovak Security Policy Institute was mainly focused on disinformation in Slovakia and sharing of the Slovak experience.

The final day of the programme continued by one more meeting with **Hana Šebová**, Head of the Extremism Screening Centre, National Antiterrorist Unit, National Crime Agency with whom participants discussed issue of the Slovak foreign fighters in Ukraine. The meeting was followed by overall evaluation of the project.

Feedback: In overall, the program and the meetings received very positive feedback from all six Ukrainian experts. The group actively engaged in debates, posed very concrete and practical questions and expressed their will to continue in the cooperation in future. Due to the positive experience from the past, two of participants already participated for the second time and after the end of the program they stressed the importance and great added value of the Civil Servants Mobility Programme for Ukraine. For the future participants suggested to better structure the program according to the phases of the criminal proceedings in Slovakia (Police > Prosecution > Courts), to include other bodies like National Security Authority, Financial Administration and Secret Services and to elaborate more on the issue of legalization of income from the criminal cases.

Part II: Serbia

Bratislava, 29 January – 2 February 2018

Participants: **Aleksandar Vidojevic**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Serbia, Security Policy Sector, CSDP and Security Challenges Department, **Jelena Krdžavac-Skakić**, Ministry of Defence of Serbia, Defence Policy Sector, **Marijana Pavlović**, Ministry of Interior of Serbia, Sector for international cooperation, EU affairs and planning.

Week-long agenda of the study trip focused on **security sector reform in the process of the EU accession** and consisted of the series of meetings with leading representatives and experts from the Slovak institutions in the field of defence, security policy, homeland security with the focus on the EU integration and CSDP.

First day January 29 was reserved for meetings at the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic. They had the chance to meet **Ján Pšenica**, Director of the South-East Europe and Turkey Department, MFEA SR and to discuss with him on topic “*Slovak Foreign Policy priorities in*

the Western Balkans within the EU integration agenda". Later that day they met with **Martin Sklenár**, Director of the Security Policy Department, MFEA SR to discuss about the topic: "*EU integration from the perspective of defense and security – Slovak experience*". After that they met with **Robert Kirnág**, Director of the Slovak OSCE Chairmanship Department, MFEA SR and his colleagues involved in preparation of the Slovak OSCE Chairmanship. They discussed the topic "*Slovakia gearing up for the OSCE Chairmanship in 2019 – ambitions in the region of the Western Balkans*". The last meeting of the first day was with **Miroslav Wlachovsky**, Head of the Strategic Communication Unit of the MFEA SR and the topic for discussion: "*Fighting the disinformation on the home front – Slovak experience*".

The second day January 30 started with the meeting at the Ministry of Defense of the Slovak Republic, where the Serbian experts met with **Marián Majer**, Director of the Office of the Deputy Minister of Defense and **Dalibor Pavolka**, Advisor to the Deputy Minister of Defense and discussed together about "*Sharing experience with the drafting of the new strategic documents of the Slovak Republic*". Then the Serbian experts moved to the premises of the GLOBSEC Policy Institute (GPI), where they met with **Stanislav Matejka**, Research Fellow, Defense and Security Programme, who briefed them on the outcomes of the current research of the GPI "*Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism*" focusing on the research of the connection between terrorism and terrorism groups and the organized crime groups as well as criminal activities. Later they met with **Kacper Rekawek**, head of the Defense and Security Programme of the GPI who introduced them outcomes of number of initiatives and programmes, that his Programme is/was leading and especially he focused on "*Introducing the project 'GLOBSEC Intelligence Reform Initiative' outcomes*".

The third day January 31 took mostly place in the National Council of the Slovak Republic (NC SR). The Serbian delegation first met with **František Šebej**, Chairman of the Committee for Foreign Affairs of the NC SR and they discussed on topic "*Geostrategic choice - Slovakia's path to the EU and NATO*". The programme continued with **Gábor Grendel** (Common People and Independent Personalities Party), chairman of the Committee for oversight of the Slovak Information Service of the NC SR, with whom the participants discussed "*The role of the parliament in democratic oversight of security services*". The delegation also met with representatives and experts of the Office of the Security Council of the Slovak Republic, Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic and they discussed various aspects of the topic "*Reform of the security services and coordination of their activities – case study Slovak Republic*". The last meeting of the day was with **Anton Hrnko**, Chairman of the Committee for Defense and Security of the NC SR (for the Slovak National Party) and the topic was "*Role of the Parliament in democratic oversight of the defense and security*".

The fourth day February 1 started with the meeting with representatives of the Department of International Relations, Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic and the International Police Cooperation of the Police Corp of the Slovak Republic. The topic of discussion was "*Slovak Police Force involvement into CSDP missions and protection of the Schengen zone*". The programme continued with the meeting with **Bohuš Kuchta**, Director of the Department of the International Relations of the Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic, while the topic was "*Slovakia's involvement in the CSDP and EU's Permanent Structured Cooperation in Defence (PESCO)*". After that the delegation moved again to the premises of the GPI where they've met with **Daniel Milo**, Senior Research Fellow and the Head of the StratCom Programme of the GPI and talked together about the topic: "*Strategic Communication - Countering Propaganda and Disinformation*". The programme of the day finished with a meeting with **Marek Pavlík**, Deputy Executive Director and **Jiří Sýkora**, Strategic Relations Coordinator of the International Visegrad Fund (IVF), who introduced them activities and work of the IVF with the focus on activities in the Western Balkans and the Neighborhood.

Last day of the Programme February 2 started with the meeting at the Embassy of the Republic of Serbia in Slovakia, Ambassador **Šani Dermaku** and the staff of the Embassy. The participants of the Programme evaluated the Programme and introduced main outcomes to the staff of the Embassy

in order they could follow up with further steps. Last part of the programme was the informal and off-record Discussion in premises of the GPI entitled: “*Serbia on its way to the EU – opportunities and challenges*”, during which each of the Serbian participants described the EU integration agenda from the point of view of their respective ministry and engaged in lively discussion with the staff and experts from GLOBSEC and GPI.

Feedback:

- The Serbian participants were very pleased with the Programme, appreciated high level of counterparts from state institutions whom they met in Slovakia. They were also very pleased by the reception by all of the Slovak officials and experts – they confirmed that relations between Serbia and Slovakia are really very good.
- The Serbian participants appreciated the position of Slovakia on the Kosovo status issue and highly appreciated the help from Slovakia as well as other Visegrad countries in relation to Serbia’s EU accession ambitions.
- They were most interested in the mechanisms and legislature of sending the civilian experts to missions and operations abroad (mostly under the EU umbrella), they also showed much interest in the issue of Strategic documents and the process of their forming. They were also very interested in learning more about preparation and mechanisms of selection and sending of police officers into missions and operations abroad.
- They conveyed message that Serbia is interested to engage in the PESCO as a partner/candidate country and showed much interest in the Slovakia-led initiative „EuroArtillery“. Serbia used to have very well-developed defence industry and it still plays important role in the Serbian economy, but has been fading recently due to the lack of investments. Serbia sees PESCO as potential tool of how it could be more closely incorporated to the West.
- Slovak side, on the other hand, expressed interest in Serbia’s experience with engagement in missions and operations (both military or civilian) in Africa.
- Two Committees of the Slovak Parliament showed interest in re-engaging the cooperation at the inter-parliamentary level.

Warsaw, 28 January – 3 February 2018

Participants: **Dušanka Jovanović**, Serbian Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, **Vera Veljanovski**, Serbian Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, **Marija Ašković Matić**, the head of the Project Management Centre at the Serbian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM) in co-operation with Centre for Eastern Studies (OSW) and in consultation with the Polish MFA prepared a weekly programme of the visit for Serbian civil servants oriented towards exchanging **experience in the area of cross-border co-operation**.

The participants from Serbia focused their attention on the functioning of the model Euroregions on the Polish-Czech frontier and other institutional forms of co-operation, legal issues and issues linked to supporting entrepreneurship. A number of instruments, mechanisms and good practices were presented the knowledge of which might prove useful in developing cross-border co-

operation between Serbia and EU member states and between Western Balkan countries. Another topic of discussions were the perspectives of development of Polish-Serbian interregional co-operation.

In Warsaw, in addition to meetings at OSW and the Polish Institute of International Affairs, the guests from Serbia visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of the Interior and Administration and the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development. In Katowice, the visit's programme included meetings devoted to Polish-Czech and Polish-Slovak cross-border co-operation at the Marshal's Office of Silesian Province and at the Regional Chamber of Commerce. In Racibórz, they took part in discussions at the City Hall and the office of the Polish part of Euroregion Silesia (Association of Municipalities of the Upper Oder Basin). The programme of the visit in Cieszyn and Český Těšín covered meetings with representatives of the government of Cieszyn, the District Job Centre (the topic of the meetings was the Polish-Czech-Slovak partnership EURES-T Beskydy) and meetings with the leaders of the Polish and Czech section of Euroregion Cieszyn Silesia. The participants also visited the Joint Secretariat of Interreg V-A Czech Republic – Poland in Olomouc and the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Ostrava. The meetings were in the form of workshops (presentations, discussions, Q & A sessions).

In the focus of interest were: models of cooperation between institutions at the national and regional levels, between local governments, local government corporations, the competences and financing of local governments, their participation in particular types of taxes, and the development of cooperation with foreign entities. These problems were particularly interesting for the Serbian participants also due to the ongoing preparations for administrative reform in Serbia. Many questions concerned the process of decentralisation in Poland and the relations which the central authorities have with local governments at various levels. The experience from the pre-accession period to the EU was especially interesting. The visit showed that the potential to transfer experience exists regarding the use of pre-accession funds, the creation and management of European projects, as well as training civil servants. An interesting experience was the activity of Euroregions, which are little known in Serbia. The role of the Polish minority in the Czech Republic and its role in the development of good-neighbourly cooperation between Poland and the Czech Republic and between the bordering regions was also presented.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia, closely cooperating with the chambers from other Western Balkan countries as one of the leaders of the Chamber Investment Forum (CIF), can play a significant role in the development of cooperation with V4 partners. In the future, as part of the CSMP, it is worth considering the visits of representatives of CIF members from different Balkan countries, prepared jointly by the Think Visegrad partners from two V4 countries on the bordering areas. There is also an interest in analysis and recommendations for Serbian and regional entities (e.g. the CIF Secretariat) in the area of promoting the investment potentials of the WB6 as a unique economic area, based on the V4 experience. It is also worth looking for ways to transfer experiences in order to start activity on the creation of Euroregions, to develop cooperation in the field of training civil servants and strengthening the inter-regional cooperation between Serbian entities and regions from the V4 countries.

The visit showed that the V4 has unique potential for cross-border cooperation, especially in the area of developing entrepreneurship and eliminating barriers for business. The support and transfer of experiences from this dimension of integration may be an important added value of the Berlin process and the Central European contribution to the promotion of European integration in the Western Balkans region.

Budapest, 11 – 17 February 2018

Participants: **Emilija Marinkov**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department for Europe, **Gabrijela Đokić**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department for Europe, **Jovana Joksimović**, Ministry of European Integration.

The topic of the study trip was **Euro-Atlantic integration**. As the participants' fields of work varied from diplomatic/political issues to project management related to EU integration, the study trip gave an insight into the Hungarian coordination mechanisms for both political affairs and development projects. The leaders of the institutional units visited during the study trip introduced their work and role within the Hungarian institutional setting. The meeting gave also a good opportunity for the participants to discuss EU related questions and learn about them from a member states' perspective.

On Monday, 12 February, the participants visited IFAT where they were given an introduction of the institute's work as well as of the Think Visegrad programme.

On Tuesday, 13 February, the first visit took place at the Department for EU Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. This department has an important role in forming the position of Hungary on the EU enlargement. Accordingly, the participants discussed the new Enlargement Strategy of the European Commission, evaluated its content and the possible future scenarios. Afterwards the group visited the Prime Minister's Office's Deputy State Secretariat for Coordination of EU Development Programmes where they could listen to a presentation on how the EU development funds are used and how the coordination mechanisms look like in Hungary. The participants could learn not only about the competences of different ministries and agencies (including planning, programming, monitoring) but also about the IT system background. After this presentation, the group had a meeting at the Department for Resource Diplomacy and Emerging Security Challenges of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade where they could share experience regarding cyber security challenges, counter-terrorism, energy security questions. Concerning the latter, they also discussed the last developments between Hungary and Serbia.

On Wednesday, 14 February, the programme started at the Ministry of National Development, at the Deputy State Secretariat for Transportation Operative Programmes. The presentation focused on the transportation development projects and provided an insight into the utilization and coordination of funds in this sector. The presentation highlighted both the benefits and challenges of the model used in Hungary. Afterwards, the group visited the Deputy State Secretariat for Coordination of EU Affairs of the Prime Minister's Office which plays the main coordinating role in EU related affairs in the Hungarian government structure that was formed in 2014. The Deputy State Secretary, **Balázs Molnár** welcomed the participants and shared some information regarding the main issues on the agenda of the European Union, including the future of Europe, the migration crisis, enlargement, Multi-annual Financial Framework, etc. Afterwards, his colleagues introduced the work of the deputy state secretariat in more details.

On Thursday, 15 February, the programme started at the Department for the Western Balkans of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade where the participants went through the main political challenges ahead of the Western Balkans' European integration process and possible solutions. Afterwards the study trip continued at the Department for Security Policy and Non-Proliferation where the main topic was the role of and the relations to NATO, the difficulties in keeping pragmatic approach towards Russia. The relations of Serbia and NATO were also discussed. The last visit in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade took place at the Department for V4 coordination. Here the participants could learn about the Visegrad cooperation, how it works and what role it played before

and after the EU accession in 2004. The introduction also allowed the participants to get information about the contribution of the V4 in the Western Balkans and in what field the V4 is active in the region. Last but not least, the participants got to know the programme of the Hungarian Presidency of Visegrad Group.

The program ended on Friday, 16 February, in IFAT where a reception was organized for the participants and the colleagues of the institute. During the lunch, the participants could discuss various European and security issues with the researchers relevant for the EU integration process of the Western Balkans.

Prague, 12 – 17 March 2018

Participants: Slobodan Cvetković, Ministry of Environmental Protection, Ljubiša Dobričić, Public Finances Department of the Office of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, Rudolf Tot, Office for Energy of the Autonomous Region of Vojvodina.

On March 12th, 2018, a delegation from Serbia has arrived in Prague for a week-long programme organised by the EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy. The goal of the programme was to educate the three delegates from Serbian governmental organisations about the question of **renewable sources of energy** in the Czech Republic—both from the legislative point of view as well as the practical one—and to exchange experiences gained by both parties in the process of implementation of “green” energy into the respective countries.

The programme for the delegation was prepared so as to provide the delegates with both the governmental and non-governmental point of view. The programme was opened with a presentation and meeting at the Czech Ministry of the Environment. There, thanks to the experience of **Klára Wajdová**, the Ministry’s head of international relations, with similar programmes, the delegation was given a presentation of the general overview of the problematic, its legislative solution, and of government subsidy programmes for renewable energy sources, such as *Zelená úsporám*. The meeting was concluded with a discussion about prospects of future cooperation between the Czech Republic and Serbia, which was led by the former Minister of the Environment, **Petr Kalaš**. To present the non-governmental part of the picture, the delegation met with **Vojtěch Kotecký** from Glopolis. They had an honest and open discussion about the reality of renewable sources of energy in the Czech Republic, and some difficulties that accompanied the arrival of green technologies into our country. Mr. Kotecký then talked of the importance of the non-governmental sector in both advising the government policy and helping the public get accustomed to new green technologies.

Before the journey, the delegation expressed a wish to see a biomass power plant, so the following day it ventured to the south of Bohemia, to Jindřichův Hradec, the location of one of CEZ’s largest plants of that kind. The CEO, **Mr. Kozák**, gave the delegation a presentation about the technology and logistics, and government support in the form of feed-in tariffs. The power plant in Jindřichův Hradec runs on biomass produced from agriculture, and has no counterpart in Serbia, despite Serbia’s interest in this technology, which is what made this particular excursion into one of great interest.

It was also important to present a different level of governance’s take on the problematic, given that in our delegation was a representative from a sub-national government. To that end, a meeting between the delegation and **Ivan Jacko**, the head of the Energy section at the Magistrate of the Capital City of Prague, was organised. Mr. Jacko presented how the capital city plans its energy

policy with renewable sources of energy and energy stability in mind, what programmes the city provides for its citizens to help them switch to those sources, and the financial resources that the city uses to those ends.

The delegation was then honoured by the presence of the Ambassador of the Republic of Serbia at dinner. Serbia and the Czech Republic have cooperation programmes in this area, so the Ambassador discussed with the delegation the progress in that cooperation, and the delegation has conveyed further cooperation possibilities offered and envisaged by the former Minister of the Environment, Mr. Kalaš. The Ambassador was then so kind as to receive the delegation in the Embassy, where the delegation met with a representative that often works on environmental issues.

Last, but not least, came the European scale of the problematic, to which end a meeting was organised between the Institute's own expert on energy questions, **Ms. Davidová**, and **Mr. Vejnović** of the CEE Bankwatch network. In addition to the European legislation, a discussion about small hydropower plants was held between the delegates and Mr. Vejnovic, as he has great experience in that department, and was able to convey some helpful information, and exchange views with the delegates.

In their free time, the delegates had time to visit the city centre during an organised tour and learn about Czech history and Czech culture. The delegation was very satisfied with the whole programme, accommodation, and organisation, as was reflected by their answers in the satisfaction questionnaire.