



Visegrad University Association

General Meeting

**University of Veterinary Medicine and Pharmacy in Košice, Slovakia,
September 19, 2019**

Minutes

1. Official Opening

The Rector of the University of Veterinary Medicine and Pharmacy in Košice, Dr. h. c. prof. Jana Mojžišová, DVM, Ph.D., in her opening speech welcomed participants of the VUA General Meeting, which took place as part of the celebrations of the university's 70th anniversary. She presented the history of the university – its past and the present. Madam Rector highlighted networking as a common topic for innovation, cooperation and internationalization. She surprised VUA President Dr. h. c. prof. Ing. Peter Bielik, PhD. by awarding him a commemorative medal for cooperation in the internationalization of the Slovak academic area.

VUA President prof. Peter Bielik in his opening speech pointed out that the University of Veterinary Medicine and Pharmacy in Košice (UVMP) was chosen as the venue for this year's general meeting on the grounds of its 70th anniversary of founding. He thanked the coordinators for organizing the Summer School at the SAU in Belgorod (prof. Turyanskiy and Assoc. Prof. Litvinenko), Szent István University (Prof. László Palkovics) for organizing the Symposium of Visegrad Journal (November 2018) and the hosting university (UVMP in Košice) for excellent organization of the VUA GM 2019. He appreciated the abundant participation and welcomed all participants and congratulated the University on its 70th anniversary and wished the university a long and successful future.

2. VUA Annual Report 2019 and VUA Financial Report 2019

Mgr. Vladislav Valach, VUA Secretary General, the VUA Annual Report 2019 presented the following parts:

1. Overview of VUA activities for the period October 2018 to August 2019

1.1 “Visegrad Journal on Bioeconomy and Sustainable Development”

1.2 VUA symposium Godollo “Smart developments and sustainability”. 5th VUA YOUTH

- scientific session
- 1.3 VUA Summer School: "FROM FIELD TO FORK – FROM TREE TO MOUTH: Agricultural Production for Food Security and Import Substitution"
 - 1.4 VUA supports IVF projects
 - 1.5 VUA YOUTH
 - 1.6 VUA Award of Excellence
 - 1.7 VUA Think Pool
 - 1.8 VUA 2018 General Meeting
 - 1.9 Promoting of VUA

1.1 "Visegrad Journal on Bioeconomy and Sustainable Development"

The journal focuses on the issues of the Visegrad countries and cooperating regions in the area of sustainable development and bioeconomy. In 2018 two issues of "**Visegrad Journal on Bioeconomy and Sustainable Development**" were published.

Issue no. 1 vol. 7 was released in May 2018, (reported in VUA Annual Report 2018) containing 6 papers.

Issue no. 2 vol. 7 was released in November 2018 and containing a further 7 papers.

In year 2019, issue no. 1 vol. 8 released in May 2019 and contained 9 papers. The next issue will be release out in period until end of year 2019.

The Visegrad Journal on Bioeconomy and Sustainable Development is registered with De Gruyter Open Access in order to raise awareness of the journal and increase its citation rate. To improve the quality of publishing, De Gruyter has allowed use of their CrossCheck System to ensure the content we publish is original and trustworthy. This system includes a database of scholarly content against which we can measure manuscripts, as well as software to do the screening.

De Gruyter Open Access services are provided with VUA covering costs of technical support and language corrections.

1.2 VUA symposium Godollo "Smart developments and sustainability". 5th VUA YOUTH scientific session

On 20 November 2018, **Visegrad University Association** and the **Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences** of **Szent István University , Gödöllő**, organized the 5th international scientific conference for students in Gödöllő, Hungary. Since its establishment, VUA has considered the support of young students and young researchers a key priority.

In the VUA YOUTH sessions, **28 international students from 17 countries submitted their research papers in 3 sessions and participated with presentations** (not only VUA members: Algeria, Azerbaijan, Colombia, Gambia, Ghana, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Mali, Philippines, Serbia, Syria, Slovakia, Somalia, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, Yemen). Several awards were given to outstanding students.

1.3 VUA Summer School: "FROM FIELD TO FORK – FROM TREE TO MOUTH: Agricultural Production for Food Security and Import Substitution"

The International Summer School was organized by Belgorod State Agricultural University and Michurinsky State Agricultural University, Russia, between 30 July and 12 August, 2019.

The programme of the summer school offered professional presentations on selected topics of seed preparation, gardening, beekeeping and fish farming in the Belgorod region and visited of leading agricultural enterprises (Luchki biogas station in the Prokhorovsky district and Belgorod Turkey LLC), as well as sight visits of the university campus. The 9 participants from Czech Republic, Bangladesh, Mexico, Tajikistan and Russia also enjoyed the interesting cultural programmes.

1.4 VUA supports IVF projects

In order to strengthen the connections of VUA members and the International Visegrad Fund, VUA offers support to IVF projects coordinated by VUA members (as proposed and approved by the VUA General Meeting of 2015).

The support includes: promotion and dissemination, publication activities (Visegrad Journal on Bioeconomy and Sustainable Development), minimum financial support of 500€ (the support to be specified in order to meet the aims and objectives of VUA).

In 2018 there was no request to support an IVF project.

1.5 VUA YOUTH

Established during the V4 Doctoral Symposium: Multifunctionality and Regional Development (Gödöllő and Gyöngyös, Hungary, October 3-5, 2013), VUA YOUTH is a sub-section of the Visegrad University Association with a mission to help fulfil the objectives of the association. It is open to all students of VUA member universities interested in contributing to the development of the association through active participation in common activities. In 2018 VUA YOUTH participated in the preparation of **VUA symposium Godollo "Smart developments and sustainability"** - 5th VUA YOUTH Scientific Session.

1.6 VUA Award of Excellence

During the VUA General Meeting 2018, the VUA Award of Excellence was awarded to the member university voted the most active. The award went to Russian State Agrarian University-Moscow Timiryazev Agricultural Academy, Russia, as the appreciation of their active participation in VUA activities. The award was presented by Prof. Peter Bielik and Prof. Istvan Komlosi to Dr. Galina Zolina, Rector of RSAU-MTAA.

During the VUA General Meeting 2019, the VUA Award of Excellence was awarded to the member university voted the most active. The award went to Belgorod State Agricultural University, Russia, as the appreciation of their active participation (organizing summer schools

6 year in a row) in VUA activities. The award was presented by Prof. Peter Bielik and Prof. Juraj Pistl to Dean of the Faculty of Extramural Education and International Affairs, Belgorod State Agricultural University Assoc. Prof. Tatiana Litvinenko.

1.7 VUA Think Pool

This tool was introduced in 2012 in order to inform VUA members about new possibilities of cooperation, search for project partners within our network and disseminate activities that might be of interest to and inspire other VUA members. The tool is **accessible** through the VUA website (www.vua.uniag.sk). 6 posts promoting events (mostly international conferences, call for papers, other events) organized by the VUA members were published during the period of August 2017 – August 2018.

1.8 VUA 2018 General Meeting

The General Meeting of the **Visegrad University Association 2018** took place at the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences and Environmental Management, University of Debrecen, Hungary on September 2 - 4. The meeting was attended by almost 40 representatives of 20 VUA member universities of 10 countries.

The General Meeting was opened by Prof. Akos Pinter, Vice-rector of the University of Debrecen, VUA President Prof. Peter Bielik and Prof. Istvan Komlosi, Dean of the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences and Environmental Management, University of Debrecen. President Bielik evaluated the association’s activities and introduced the plans of the Visegrad University Association for the upcoming period. The General Meeting approved the VUA Annual Report as well the Proposal of activities for 2019.

During 2018, new universities applied for VUA membership. Two of the applicants were approved by the General Meeting and became members of VUA:

- Bila Tserkva National Agrarian University, Ukraine and
- University of Veterinary and Pharmaceutical Sciences Brno, Czech Republic.

1.9 Promoting of VUA

Understanding the importance of disseminating and promotion activities, the **Visegrad University Association** has been widely promoted during 2018-2019: VUA has been represented at various academic and scientific events in Slovakia and abroad.

2. Financial report 2018 - 2019

Expenditures:		Income:	
<i>Activity/Cost item</i>	<i>Amount in EUR</i>	<i>Activity/Cost item</i>	<i>Amount in EUR</i>

VJBSD, printing, editing and publishing	1614,40	VUA membership Fees (Sep 2019)	8680
Doctoral symposium, VUA YOUTH	750		
VUA Summer School	400		
VUA GM	1669,50		
Activities in total	4434		
Promotion	980		
Secretariat	0		
Travelling	2600		
Other costs	0		
Total	8014	Total	8680
Positive balance:	666		

ANNUAL REPORT WAS APPROVED BY ALL PARTICIPANTS.

3. Proposal of VUA activities for 2020

Mgr. Vladislav Valach introduced VUA activities for the period 2020 in relation to the following points:

1. "Visegrad Journal on Bioeconomy and Sustainable Development"
2. VUA symposium Godollo "Security, Safety and Sustainability"
3. International Scientific Conference: "Innovative Approaches for sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Development"
4. VUA Summer School
5. VUA YOUTH
6. VUA Award of Excellence
7. VUA 2020 General Meeting
8. Promoting of VUA

Preliminary use of VUA budget

1. "Visegrad Journal on Bioeconomy and Sustainable Development"

There will be two issues of the journal published in April and October 2020. The **Visegrad Journal on Bioeconomy and Sustainable Development** (VJBSD) is registered with De Gruyter Open Access in order to raise awareness of the journal and increase its citation rate as proposed at the VUA General Meeting 2012. Each issue will contain 8 articles.

Key tasks for the next year are: greater promotion of the Journal, more articles, and higher citation rates. (Scopus, Web of Science, conferences, other journals)

2. "Smart Development and Sustainability" – 6th VUA YOUTH Scientific Session

The annual scientific conference organized for bachelor, master and PhD students will be organized at the **Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences of the Szent István University, Godollo, Hungary, under the auspices of the Visegrad University Association on November 19, 2019.** The aim of this conference is to provide a forum for **bachelor, master as well as doctoral students of VUA institutions** to present their research results at the conference and to have a publication in a conference proceeding with ISBN. Professors and lecturers from VUA institutions will constitute the scientific committee whose role will be to provide students with guidelines regarding the continuation of their research. This conference also functions as a platform for young researchers (also outside the CEE region) to build new professional relationships.

Dr. Henrietta Nagy presented the 6th VUA YOUTH scientific session and reminded the participants about important deadlines for registration and abstract submission (on 11 October, 2019) and for full paper submission (on 8 November, 2019).

The conference is free of charge and Szent István University covers the editing and printing costs of the conference proceeding, the organizational costs, rent of premises, as well as the buffets during the conference and provides the necessary technical equipment in the session. Participants were asked to prepare a 10-minute ppt presentation. More information is available on the VUA web page.

3. International Scientific Conference: "Innovative Approaches for Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Development"

The conference provides a venue for policy makers, top managers, academicians and researchers that deal with economic and management issues affecting the entirety or specific nodes within the agri-food chains. The conference will be organized by the Faculty of Economics and Management Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra and by Corvinus University of Budapest on May 13-15, 2020 as a part of the international Scientific Days Conference. VUA presentation and benefits:

- Two nominations for the scientific committee
- Two nominations for conference session chairs in Budapest
- Two nominations for conference session chairs in Nitra
- Seven VUA nominations for waving the registration fee

If you would like to participate in the conference, the deadline for applying is the end of November 2019.

4. VUA Summer School

It is proposed that a VUA Summer School should be organized by a VUA member university/universities on the topics of sustainable development, agriculture, life sciences, etc. (Further ideas and suggestions on the part of VUA members are most welcome.) The organizing VUA member institution will be exempt from paying the VUA membership fee for the given year.) Assoc. Prof. Litvinenko and Prof. Faixová suggested that the Summer School is organised jointly by two member universities BSAU and UVMP. The Summer school usually lasts 2 weeks. The first week could be organized in Belgorod SAU and the second week at UVMP in Košice. Most important is the selection of topics (e. g. Animal science, food hygiene,..). The first call should be in November 2019. More information will be available at VUA web page.

5. VUA YOUTH

Students organized under the Visegrad University Association (VUA) maintain regular communication and contact. Since 2014, when VUA Youth was founded, more and more students have engaged in mutual cooperation, which can lead to new possibilities in publication and presentation of results (question of LSU: how could their students participate and at what levels?). Dr. Henrietta Nagy (Godollo) agreed to be in touch with LSU regarding the matter.

Communication proceeds mainly on social media and by email. Students also meet during conferences, foreign studies and student exchange programs among universities (also outside VUA). Equally important is the issue of the possibility of students communicating with university and faculty management.

It is imperative that new students should join the VUA YOUTH network in order to support the aims and objective of the Visegrad University Association within student communities. It is important that VUA members should contribute to helping students become more active.

6. VUA Award of Excellence

It is proposed that in 2020, too, **VUA Award of Excellence** should be awarded. The award will be presented annually at the General Meeting to one VUA member university with the most outstanding contribution to the realization of the aims and objectives of the association based on the following conditions: sustainable achievements in the field of education, science and research, active international cooperation within and outside VUA, promotion of Visegrad University Association, other activities supporting the common goals of the Visegrad University Association, and paid VUA membership fee.

7. VUA 2020 General Meeting

It is proposed that the VUA GM 2020 should be organized in cooperation by two universities - Szent István University and Kaposvár University, Hungary. It has been agreed that the university organizing the VUA General Meeting will be exempt from paying the VUA Membership fee for the given year. The exact date of the event will be decided later.

8. Promoting of VUA

The VUA Executive Committee wishes to ask all VUA members to promote the association and its activities as widely as possible.

Preliminary use of VUA budget:

Activity/Cost item	Amount in EUR
Visegrad journal VJBSD – De Gruyter	1440
Visegrad journal VJBSD editing and paper version	1200

Godollo conference	600
Corvinus and Nitra Conference	1000
Summer school	400
VUA General Meeting	2000
Activities in total	6640
Promotion	250
VUA Secretariat	500
Total	7390

ACTIVITIES WERE APPROVED BY ALL PARTICIPANTS.

9. Introduction of new VUA members

The following university has applied for full membership of VUA:

Kaposvár University, Hungary

Postal Address: Guba sándor utca 40. P.O. Box: 16, 7400 Kaposvár, Hungary

Rector: Prof. Dr. Melinda Kovács

Date of foundation: 2000

Number of students: 2719

Staff: 610

The mission of the University is aimed of providing professional education in accordance of the requirements of the labour market, which determine intellectual, scientific and cultural role in the region, which follows and reflects to the socio-economic challenges of the Central and South Transdanubian region.

University, as an independent higher education unit for the areas of agriculture, environment, economics, pedagogy and arts, fulfils its tasks in co-operation with domestic and international partner institutions.

The University's strategic plan is to develop its status as an internationally recognized university.

10. Discussion and approval of new members by the General Meeting

During 2019, two new universities applied for VUA membership - Kaposvár University, Hungary and Cherkassy Experimental Station of Bioresources National Academy of Agricultural Sciences of Ukraine, Ukraine, which application was rejected due to failure to submit requested documents.

Only one organization (Kaposvár University, Hungary) applying to become VUA members was unanimously approved.

11. Awards Ceremony – Visegrad Award of Excellence

The representatives of VUA members voted for the most active university to be awarded the VUA Award of Excellence. The winner was Belgorod State Agricultural University, Russia. Assoc. Prof. Tatiana Litvinenko, Dean of the Faculty of Extramural Education and International Affairs, Belgorod State Agricultural University accepted the award presented by the VUA President, Dr.h.c. Prof. Peter Bielik, PhD. and by the vice-rector Prof. Juraj Pistl.

12. VUA Vice Presidents and VUA Executive Committee members elections

During the VUA GM 2019, VUA Vice Presidents and VUA Executive Committee members has been elected. All candidates have agreed with their nomination. Nominated candidate must receive a minimum of 8 votes in order to succeed.

Results of voting:

List of nominated candidates for VUA Vice Presidents:

1. **Prof.Dr. László Palkovics**, Rector of Szent István University, Hungary – **15 votes**
2. **Prof. dr. hab. inż. Włodzimierz Sady**, Rector of University of Agriculture in Krakow, Poland – **14 votes**
3. **Prof. Dr. Alexander Vladimirovich Turyanskiy**, Rector of Belgorod State Agricultural University named after V.Gorin, Russian Federation – **13 votes**

List of nominated candidates of VUA Executive Committee members:

1. **Dr. Oleksandr Bonkovskyy**, Head of International Department, Bila Tserkva National Agrarian University, Ukraine – **16 votes**
2. **Prof. MVDr., Ph.D. Vladimír Celer**, ViceRector of University of Veterinary and Pharmaceutical Sciences Brno, Czech Republic – **14 votes**
3. **Prof., Ph.D. Zoran Grgić**, Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Zagreb, Croatia – **15 votes**
4. **Dr. Ivana Tregenza**, Associate Director, LSU AgCenter Global Network, Louisiana State University, USA – **15 votes**

13. Presentations of invited speakers

Martin Tomko, DVM, PhD., UVMP in Košice

**“ The University of Veterinary Medicine and Pharmacy
- life within and beyond the university campus”**

Dr. Martin Tomko, vice-rector for education at UVMP, presented educational and scientific activities at the university.

UVMP was established in 1949 as the Veterinary College in Košice and this year it celebrates the 70th anniversary of its foundation. UVMP is the only institution providing veterinary

education and since 2006 one out of two institutions providing pharmaceutical education in the Slovak Republic.

UVMP in Košice is a one faculty university providing education in first level (bachelor), second (master), joined first and second level (doctoral and master) and third level of higher education (PhD study).

UVMP has received an international evaluation and accreditation. The evaluation process of EAEVE (European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education) was successfully completed in 2016. At the time our university joined one of 14 European veterinary schools (out of 96) with the status of an accredited school.

The university actively participates in international activities in the field of European education and veterinary education. Cooperation with other academic institutions was realized within the active membership of the university in national, world and European associations. UVMP is a member of several associations whose aim is also to coordinate various activities in the field of international relations of universities. In 2018, UVMP became an associate member of the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC).

The University opened a unique workplace in 2018 - Center of Clinical Skills, to provide wider opportunities to acquire practical clinical skills for students in their future profession.

2000 students have been studying at the university in the three levels of study, more than 10 % are foreign students from different countries of Europe, Japan and USA. A great plus for the university is its special facilities, which are the basis of practical skills when working with animals: School Farm in Zemplínska Teplica, the special Facility for Breeding and Diseases of Wild Animals, Fish and Bees in Rozhanovce, Equestrian Grounds and Sports Club TJ Slávia UVMP.

There are also student dormitories, the Institute for Scientific Information and Library and clubs: Flora Club, Aqua Terra Club, Cynological Club, Hunting Cynology Club, Breeders Club, Falcony and Raptor Rehabilitation Club, Mineralogy Club, Small Mammal and Exotic Bird Breeders Club and Beekeepers Club.

Assoc. Prof. Alica Kočíšová, DVM, Ph.D., UVMP in Košice

**“The world is changing
- the impact of global change on the spread of parasitoses”**

Assoc. Prof. Kočíšová presented several factors, which play a critical role in the introduction, persistence and spreading of many vector borne pathogens/diseases in Europe and elsewhere, such as: migration of people, transport of goods and animals, wars and economic crises, population growth, resistance and global climate change (as alarming factor of parasites spread).

In her presentation the following areas of global changes were discussed:

- a) An increase of commercial exchanges between EU countries and other continents;
- b) In some areas a sharp increase of wildlife populations such as red deer, roe deer or wild boar, and consequently a higher risk of transfer of pathogens from cattle to wild life and vice versa;
- c) Global warming and environmental degradation and pollution, loss of biodiversity, which could have an important impact on the distribution, and abundance of some vectors;

d) In some areas a tendency towards extensive cattle breeding which could lead to a higher exposure to some vectors and associated pathogens;

e) The intensive selection for some production traits such as meat and milk could also result in an increased susceptibility to different arthropod pests in some very susceptible genotypes.

In her presentation many unanswered questions were raised that provide prospects for next research of the blood sucking insects and the possibility to build on and develop knowledge in this field. However, climate change is causing constant changes in the spread of both vectors and pathogens, and these findings may not be up to date in the short term. For this reason, continuous surveillance is necessary.

Assoc. Prof. Branislav Peťko, DVM, D.Sc., UVMP in Košice

“Interdisciplinary Research Innovation of the Center for Applied Research”

Assoc. Prof. Peťko presented in his lecture 3 main areas that Center for Applied Research (CAR) plans to apply in the coming years.

The first of the discussed topics were progressive functional polymeric materials with repellent effect, where he has elucidated progressive polymers - biodegradable new generation materials, non-toxic, which will be applied to the matrix and made in the form of fiber, from which protective equipment for animals and humans with repellent effect against ticks should be made.

He presented a clear overview of the possible application of these products in the form of various animal harnesses, socks, stockings and blankets for humans.

Another topic that was addressed in this lecture was: Telomeres, telomerase as an activator in veterinary medicine. He explained a detailed analysis of telomeres and telomerase and possible means to keep these telomeres as long as possible using plant preparations in animals. To increase the activity and extend the life of animals, especially animals in professions such as police, rescue and guide dogs.

The third and last topic discussed was the highly current swine fever. Assoc. Prof. Peťko presented a hypothesis suggesting the interconnection of swine fever with geophysical anomalies of the Earth's magnetic field and solar activity. He spoke about the possible effect of reduced solar activity in the 11-year cycle of the Sun on the occurrence of swine fever.

The lecture suggested that low solar activity is directly related to the occurrence of swine fever.

The lecture also suggested that both low solar activity and extremely low magnetic fields have a potential effect on the occurrence and spread of swine fever in terms of reducing the immunity of swine that are kept in areas with low Earth's magnetic field.

13. Closing remarks

The VUA Secretary General appreciated involvement of all participating members and the VUA President expressed his belief in the high level of success in fulfilment of future planned activities.

Proposals:

Assoc. Prof. Litvinenko suggested including in the programme of the future VUA general meetings also some time for a tour of hosting organization/university.