

Visegrad Fund – Project Summary Report (project VF: 12520120)

Challenges in Business Education + International Student Business Competition: A Mysterious Business Case II

On 12 January 2026, a six-month project titled “*Challenges in Business Education + International Student Business Competition: A Mysterious Business Case II*” was launched following its approval by the Visegrad Fund in December 2025. The project, officially evidenced in the Fund’s “V4 Gen” category, was implemented through the collaboration of three universities: Prague University of Economics and Business (Czech Republic), Matej Bel University (Slovakia) and the University of Pécs (Hungary). As part of the project, students from three of the four Visegrad countries were recruited to participate in the second edition of the competition, which took place from the evening of 17 January to the morning of 22 January 2026. During this period, their educational progress was assessed.

Additionally, as a new component of the project, Matej Bel University hosted a Round Table on Challenges in Business Education on 17 January 2026, held from morning to afternoon. The event, open to the public, featured five speakers and provided an opportunity for participating students to engage in discussions on the current challenges facing business education.

An application and qualification round were established to identify the most suitable candidates. In total, 11 students from Czech universities and 7 from Hungarian universities participated, representing 6 different nationalities. This time, interviews with a two-member committee took place. The original plan to have 6 students from Czech, 6 students from Hungarian, and 6 students from Slovak universities could not be maintained, as Slovak universities were mostly reluctant to promote the event, and the overall interest of local students was thus almost zero, despite other and multiple attempts to promote the event.

On the evening of the first day of the competition (17 January 2026), a random draw was conducted to form three groups. Each group was then randomly assigned a mentor. On the final evening of the competition (21 January), the mentors served as members of the evaluation panel, listening to the presentations prepared by the teams. The panel, in which mentors were not permitted to vote for the teams they had mentored, was joined by one of the two members from the Organizing team. Each group worked on a unique case study; however, all the cases were interconnected by a hidden theme, effectively forming one comprehensive case study.

The competition took place at a secret location, meaning the students were unaware of their destination in advance. To further improve the project from last year, the case study was gamified by implementing competitive outdoor activities, which helped the teams bond even more and elevate their overall experience.

Again, the event proved to be a success. A winning group was selected and awarded with a financial prize of 300 EUR per participant. Additionally, the top-performing student received an award of 150 EUR. Eventually, the mystery embedded in the case study by the project’s author, an employee of the Prague University of Economics and Business, remained again unsolved.

The purpose of the whole project was twofold: in addition to its educational aim, it also had a scientific focus, seeking to confirm last year’s findings that competition-based and team-based learning are effective methods for enhancing educational progress among bachelor’s degree university students with little or no prior experience with case studies.

Assessment of Participants' Knowledge

Before and after the event, participants were asked to complete the same questionnaire, with slightly modified questions and answer options to reflect changes over the course of the event.

The Organizing Team of the project from the Prague University of Economics and Business tracked the participants' improvements in several areas of economics. Figures 1 to 7 illustrate how the knowledge of the 18 participants evolved during the competition. In the figures, 1 is always the lowest score.

Figure 1 – Improvements in General Economics

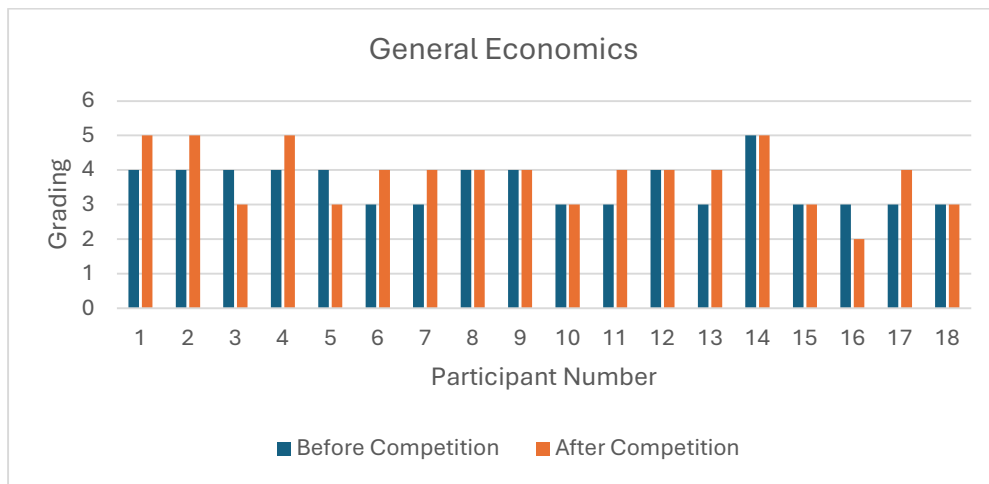


Figure 2 – Improvements in International Business

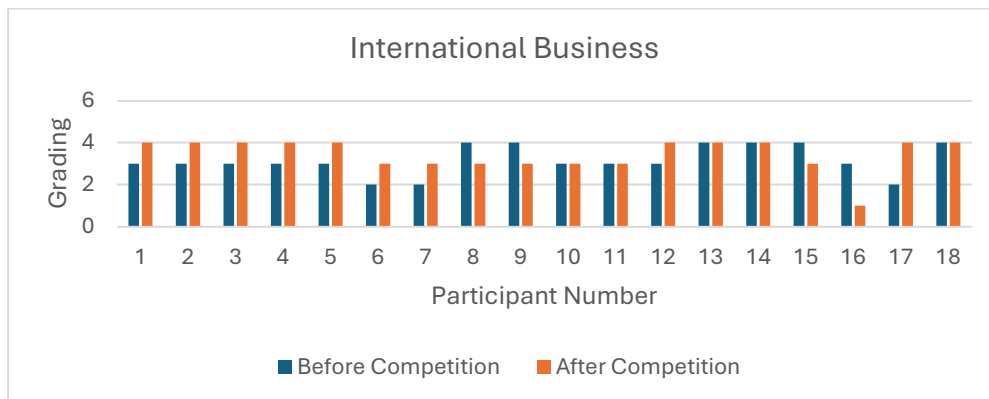


Figure 3 – Improvements in International Marketing



Figure 4 – Improvements in International Management

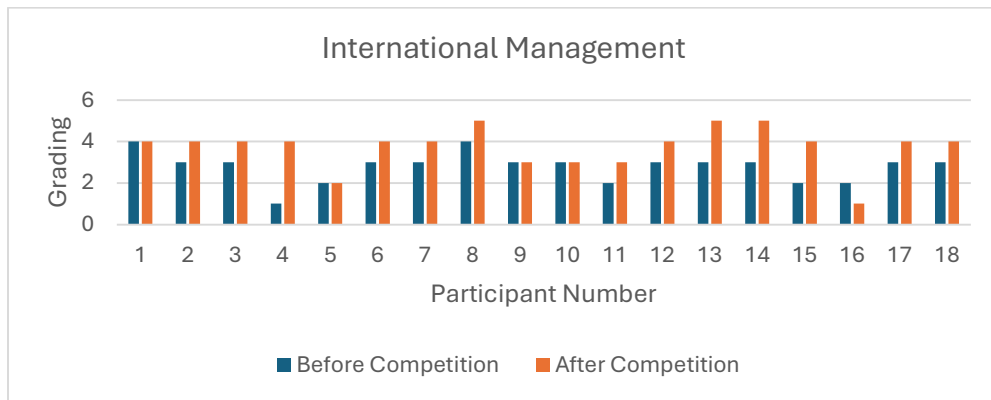


Figure 5 – Improvements in International Finances

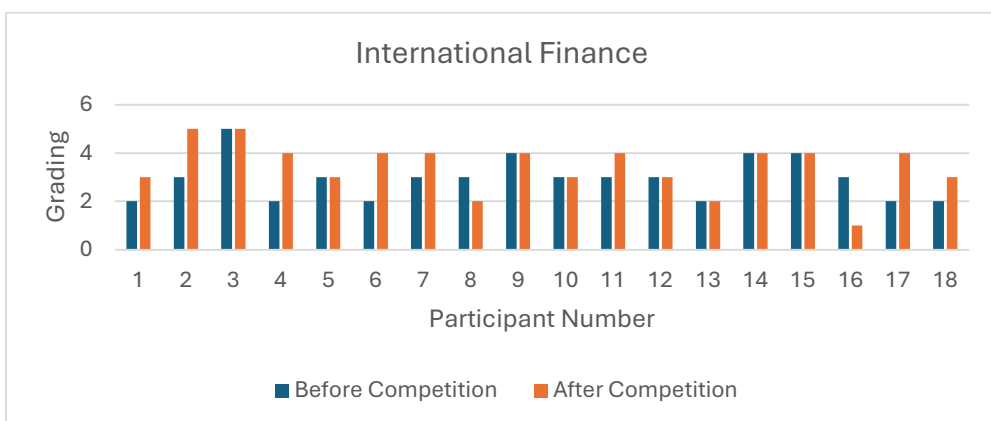


Figure 6 – Improvements in International Logistics

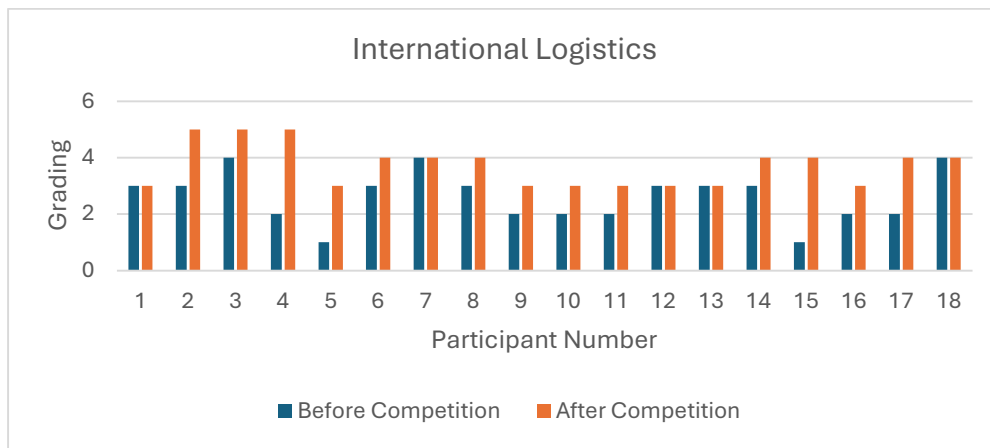
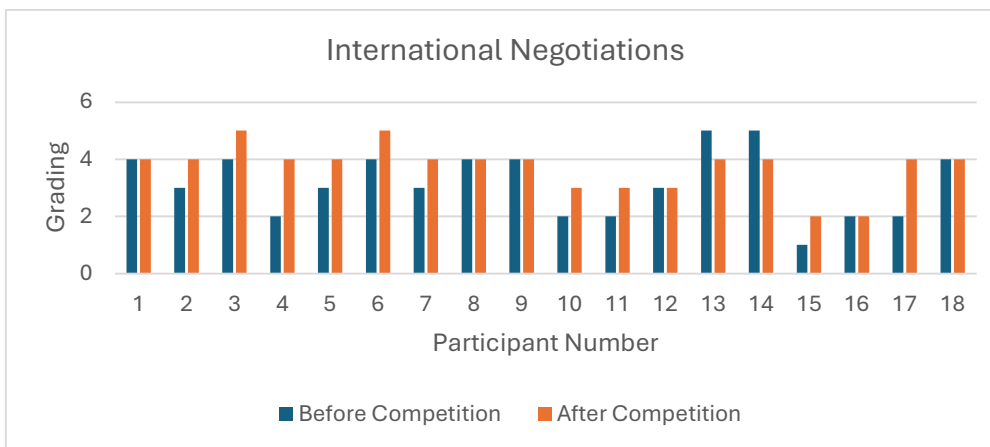


Figure 7 – Improvements in International Negotiations



On many occasions, students indicated improvements in several areas of economics. At times, they reported a decline. However, this can be explained by the fact that the competition revealed their actual level of knowledge, leading them to assess themselves more critically. Additionally, it is possible that the assigned case used in their group did not emphasize certain topics. While individual statistics may not reflect the full picture, the average score does, as shown in Table 1. Improvements were observed in nearly all tracked areas. Only one area showed no change in the average score, which can be attributed to different factors.

Table 1 – Summary of Improvements in Selected Areas of Economics; Year 2026 (N = 18)

Area of Economics	Before the event	After the event
General Economics	3,56	3,83
International Business	3,17	3,44
International Marketing	3,28	3,28
International Management	2,78	3,72
International Finances	2,94	3,44
International Logistics	2,61	3,72
International Negotiations	3,17	3,72

Table 2 – Summary of Improvements in Selected Areas of Economics, Year 2025 (N = 30)

Area of Economics	Before the event	After the event
General Economics	3,30	3,73
International Business	2,97	3,80
International Marketing	3,20	3,67
International Management	3,23	3,57
International Finances	3,27	3,53
International Logistics	3,40	3,67
International Negotiations	3,63	3,63

The overall satisfaction rating for the competition was 4,5 on a scale from one to five. This indicates a very high level of participant satisfaction with the event. After the event, an aftermovie video was created and shared online on the YouTube channel “ISBC: A Mysterious Business Case“.

The project is scheduled to conclude on 11 June 2026. It is expected that a new edition will be launched in 2027. The Organizing Team from the Prague University of Economics and Business is very grateful for the cooperation of the two partner universities and for the overall support provided by the Visegrad Fund staff.

Figure 8 – Group photo of all 18 student participants and their chaperones at the official opening of the competition in Banská Bystrica, 17 January 2026.



Figure 9 – As with last year, on the first day, the groups were randomly selected, and each group was assigned a mentor. This year, three groups were formed.

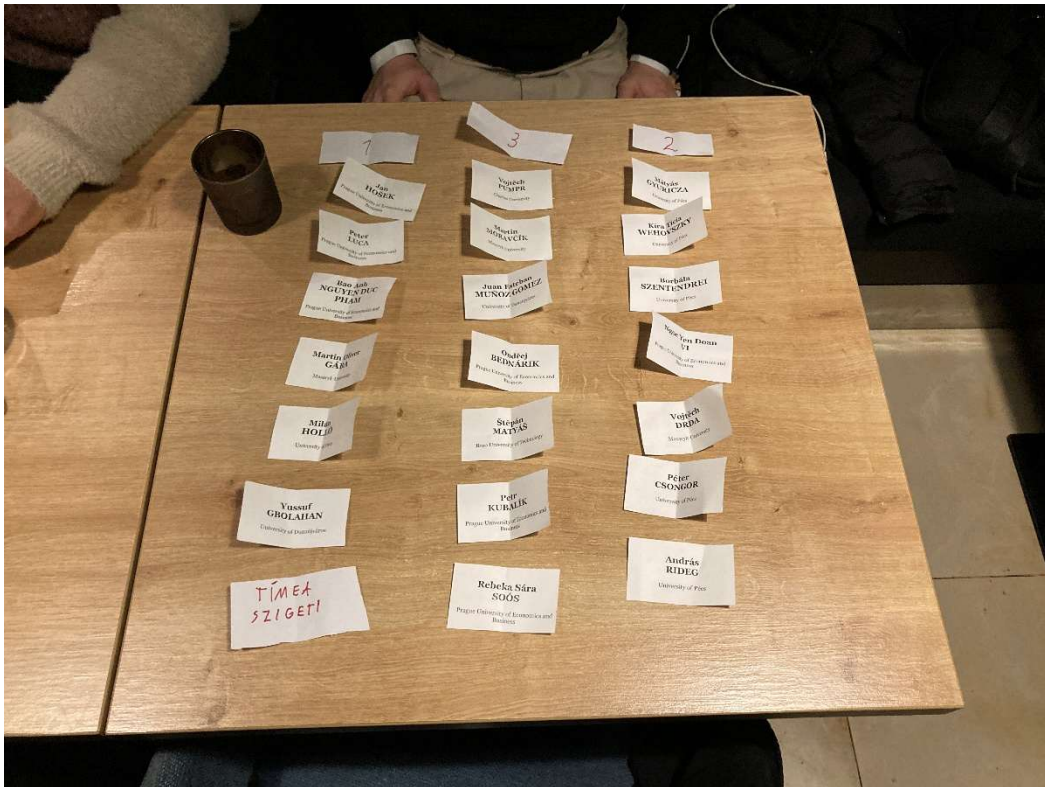


Figure 10 – Teamwork.

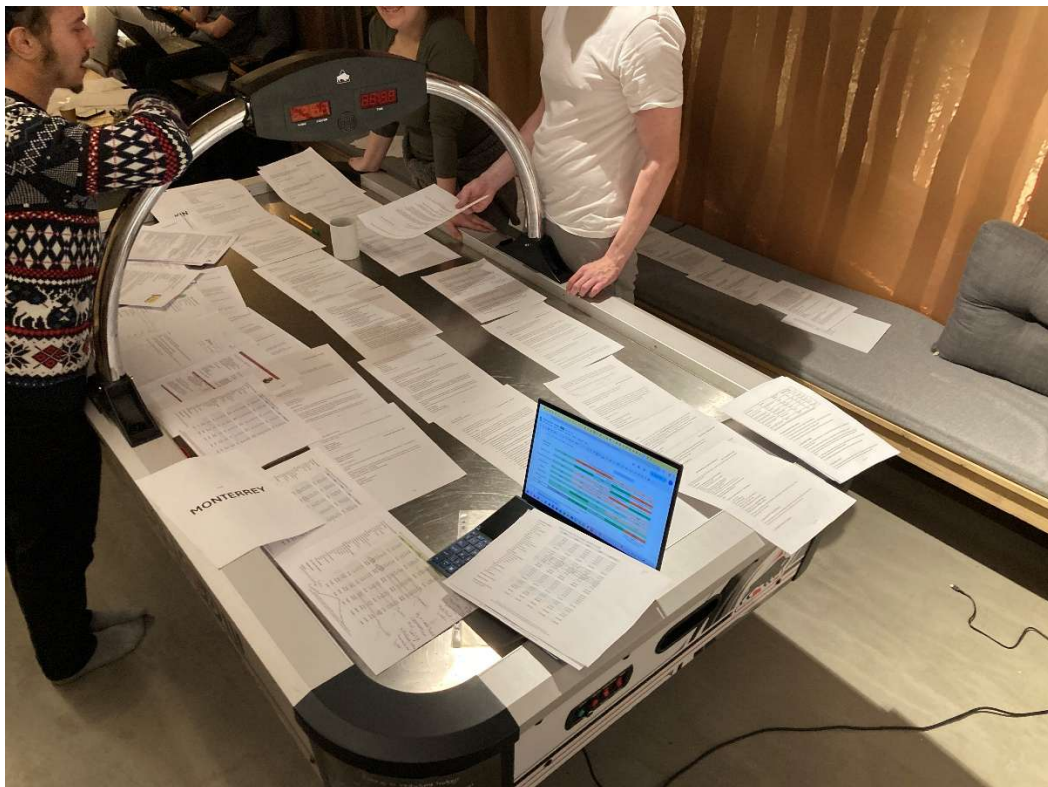


Figure 11 – The competition was preceded by a roundtable discussion titled „Challenges in Business Education“, which took place from morning until afternoon at Matej Bel University on 17 January 2026.



Figure 12 – During the defense session.



Figure 13 – One of the presentations.



Figure 14 – This year, the competition was enhanced with game & outdoor elements.



Figure 15 – The winning group.



This project no. 12520120 was sponsored by:



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