



EUROPE
OF THE
CARPATHIANS

Cooperation



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WYDAWNICTWO SEJMOWE
WARSZAWA 2019

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Warszawa 2019

ISBN 978-83-7666-644-0

KANCELARIA SEJMU

Wydawnictwo Sejmowe

Edition II supplemented

Warszawa 2019

<http://wydawnictwo.sejm.gov.pl>

e-mail: wydawnictwo@sejm.gov.pl

Printing: Centrum Poligrafii Sp. z o.o.



Ladies and Gentlemen!

In the mountains, we do not see any limits. In the mountains, what we look for is freedom. Of course, there is also competition in the mountains, but it involves an objective, not an opponent. For man, this objective is first of all to seek harmony, balance and a dignified life in our rather complex geopolitical space of Central Europe. Therefore, man naturally strives to attain sustainable development, tries to strike a balance between economics and ecology that would inspire him to undertake creative actions – he strengthens his ability to think in the categories used by many generations. And whole communities, by preserving the heritage of their ancestors, build a sense of national consciousness more on ethical grounds than on economic growth or by meeting basic needs. Such an approach is closely associated with commitment to preserve the multiculturalism and biodiversity of the Carpathians, clean air, or the most strategic resource for the future: drinking water. While it is easy to destroy and it can be done quickly, one needs time and cooperation to build. Therefore, it is with the future of the generations in mind that each of us should focus on cooperation with fellow human beings. We need time and space to build mutual trust. As equals. As free men.

The concept of Europe of the Carpathians draws inspiration from this very philosophy. It derives from the unique space formed by a great bend stretching more than a thousand kilometres from the Alps in Eastern Austria to the Balkans

in Southern Europe. A great bend which for centuries has enabled cooperation of nations and countries, sometimes forming great powers. It is the native land of many extraordinary people who greatly influenced the shape of our civilisation, such as Henri Coandă from Bucharest or Sergei Korolev from Zhytomyr whose jet-propelled aircraft broke the barrier of sound and Earth's gravity; such as Ignacy Łukasiewicz from the Subcarpathia or Jan Szczepanik from Mostyska, called the Polish Edison: the pioneers of the oil industry and colour photography, and weaving and television, respectively; such as Nikola Tesla, a brilliant Croatian Serb – a man who harnessed electricity by building an electric engine and a solar battery; as Otto Wichterle, a Czech chemist from Prostějov without whose plastics it would be difficult to imagine today's clothing, or Albert Szent-Györgyi from Budapest, the discoverer of vitamins C and P.

If it had not been for the Hungarian architect Ernő Rubik, we would not have the famous Rubik's cube today. And without another Hungarian, Joseph Pulitzer, the Pulitzer Prize would never be established in the USA. Without Wolfgang von Kempelen, there would not be a typewriter for visually impaired. And we also have great authors whose works enrich the spiritual life of people all over the world. Among them, there are genius composers: Fryderyk Chopin, Béla Bartók, Ferenc Liszt, Antonín Dvořák, Gustav Mahler born in Moravia, Zoltán Kodály, and currently Henryk Mikołaj Górecki and Krzysztof Penderecki. Also plastic arts' creators gained worldwide importance: Kazimierz Malewicz, Andy Warhol, Constantin Brâncuși. World literature was permanently enriched by writers and thinkers from the region of the Carpathians: Martin Buber, Paul Celan, Mircea Eliade, Zbigniew Herbert, Eugène Ionesco, Stanisław Lem, Sándor Márai, Bruno Schulz and many others, e.g. Franz Kafka, Jaroslav Hašek, Bohumil Hrabal and Milan Kundera who all lived in the Czech Republic. We also have modern history heroes such as József Antall and Henryk Sławik, or martyrs such as Ryszard Siwiec, Jan Palach, Sándor Bauer or the last political prisoner of Gulag Wasyl Stus, for whom human freedom was the greatest value. First of all, we should remember that Wadowice, a town situated at the foot of the Carpathian Mountains, was home to Saint John Paul II, the creator of the concept of a civilization of love and its promoter, a priceless project that could help us overcome numerous conflicts shaking the humanity of the 21st century; the project was inspired by the values guiding the lives of the people living in the Carpathian region.

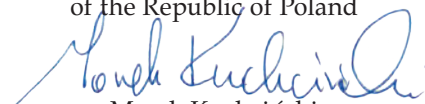
Our region has enormous intellectual potential – let me just remind you of the fact that the nations living in the area spanning between the Baltic and the Adriatic Sea gave the world 56 Nobel Prize winners.

For years, the Europe of the Carpathian Conference has been a place of meeting and discussion for people who want to speak freely both about the preservation of the unique wealth of culture, nature, and management practices as well as about work on subsequent initiatives aimed at developing the countries of our region in the world of global competition, about the initiative of the Three Seas; about NATO and security; about the European Union in the context of problems, challenges and opportunities it is currently facing in many areas of its activities; about axiological aspects of our civilisation; economic strategies and growth; new perspectives of scientific cooperation of the Carpathian states – these are only some of the subjects addressed at our conferences. I invite you to cooperate and wish you a fruitful discussion.

The “Europe of the Carpathians” Conference has been held in 25 editions thus far. Many of its participants, including representatives of European parliaments, got to know the countries of our region through its lens – an open forum, a place for meetings and discussions, setting goals and searching for agreements. Europe of the Carpathians arouses curiosity towards the neighbours and satisfies this curiosity during the subsequent meetings in Krasieczyn, Regietów and Krynica.

I invite you to join the traditional meeting and get to know each other this year!

Marshal of the Sejm
of the Republic of Poland

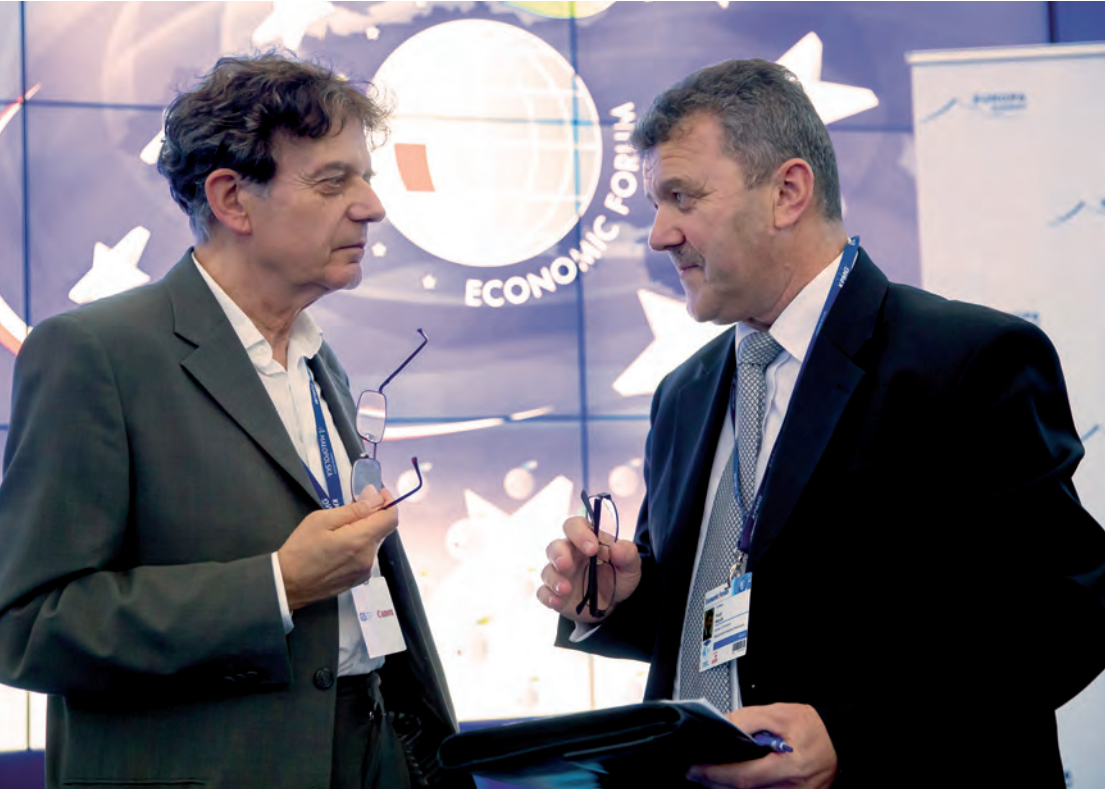


Marek Kuchciński

Challenges for the Visegrad Group

Conferences organised as part of the “Europe of the Carpathians” cycle during the Economic Forum in Krynica and separately in Przemyśl and Nowy Targ are important to me, as their long-time participant, for two main reasons. One of these reasons is the friendly and cordial atmosphere created by their organisers, which is a necessary prerequisite for initiating the debate between participants from the Visegrad Group and neighbouring countries. The second is related to the relevance of the main topics of the conference which focus on a broad range of current political, economic, educational and cultural issues. In 2016 in Krynica-Zdrój, the Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland Marek Kuchciński, the initiator and *spiritus movens* of the “Europe of the Carpathians” conference cycle, decided to include the panel entitled *Intellectual facets of Central and Eastern Europe* in the agenda of the conference; the panel included the following topics: “The search for identity of Central and Eastern Europe”, “Common symbols, myths and archetypes in Central and Eastern Europe”, “The role of Christianity in the modern facet of Central and Eastern Europe”, “Central and Eastern Europe in the face of Western European civilisation impacts”. For the first time, the conference covered topics which until then had not been addressed by politicians. This new challenge proved surprising also for the participants in the panel, who did not take full advantage of this opportunity to show the importance and the relevance of these issues to the politicians present at the venue.

The events of the last few months, including the establishment of the structures of the European Parliament and the appointment of the President of the European Commission, demonstrated the relevance of these topics and the urgent need to discuss them. Growing criticism directed at Poland and Hungary is an indication of increasingly diverse approaches to political and social (cultural) realities in the European Union. The European leaders invoke European values, but their understanding of them varies significantly. The question is, what criterion should be adopted to judge this ideological and political dispute? What are the true European values and what are they based on? What



Pavol Mačala (on the right) and Aleksander Tomský, International Conference “Europe of the Carpathians”, Krynica-Zdrój, 7 September 2016

is this dispute actually about? Is it about the truth and the good of Europeans? According to the current post-modern line of thought, there is no such thing as the objective truth. There is only critical thinking based on criteria of progress measured in economic terms. Do we abandon our search for the objective truth about the human being and the world?

It is time to address the issue of European values in the context of what is probably most pertinently defined by the term “post-truth”. The editorial committee of the Oxford dictionary regularly chooses the word of the year. In 2016, the term “post-truth” was the winner – “an adjective relating to circumstances or describing a situation in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than emotional and personal appeals”. The choice of such a word has a particular significance in the context of global scepticism, terrorism and violence, anti-systemic policy, populism and growing

social injustice. It is time to speak openly about the reasons behind this state of affairs. It is also necessary to think about how to change it. Is there such a thing as objective truth and with which set of values is it associated? What are its fundamental assumptions? Will deeper political integration, aiming at federalising the EU by establishing a financial and fiscal community based on liberal democracy and civil society, be sufficient to overcome the current crisis, or will it be necessary to return to the proven traditional European values founded on moral order at a personal (the human being) and collective (the nation) level?

It is necessary to openly indicate the role of anthropologically true values versus the role of financial interests and commerce in modern Europe. If we want to emphasise certain values, we need to clearly declare them, and not only talk about them. We need to clearly identify the anthropological values which

Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland Marek Kuchciński at the panel “The Carpathians – cooperation platforms”, Conference “Europe of the Carpathians”, Przemyśl, 27 February 2016 (persons in the photograph – see p. 176)





Bratislava Castle

constitute the basis of modern humanism and to establish the European point of view on the human being and the society. The time has come to ask European politicians, in particular Christian politicians, some questions. What is a human being? Are there any universal human rights rooted in our nature? Is there a generally binding moral law?

We associate the present times with the events of the turn of the first millennium, when Europe, tired of clashes with the Muslim world and the conflict with Byzantium, rose as a Christian circle, bringing moral order, and through it transformed and integrated the Medieval society into nation states, thus creating unprecedented conditions for their social and cultural growth. St. John Paul II reminded us: “what led Europe to unity in all its diversity, was the spread of the Christian faith which shaped the culture of the continent (...). Christianity

has achieved a lasting position as the religion of Europeans (...), although not all Europeans consider themselves as Christians (...). At a time when efforts are being made to build 'a common European home' using legislative tools, which serve to promote unity and solidarity among the peoples of this continent, we have to pay attention to the values on which it relies". When, for instance, the French President, E. Macron, or F. Timmermans speak of European values, they most certainly do not bind them with Christian values, although these undoubtedly guided the founding fathers of the EU – Robert Schuman, Konrad Adenauer, Alcide De Gasperi. Can we say today that the leaders of the Central and Eastern European states are cynical, when they invoke the ideas of the EU's founding fathers?

In 1988, before the collapse of the Iron Curtain, St. John Paul II gave an interview, which at his own request was treated as a private conversation, and

Panel "Visegrad Group – contemporary challenges, new forms of cooperation", Conference "Europe of the Carpathians", Krynica-Zdrój, 7 September 2016 (persons in the photograph – see p. 176)



Bratislava, Slovakia





published only after his death. When asked, who would gain more from closer relations between communist Europe and Western Europe, he said that the real question was “who would lose more”: “I would not be far from the hypothesis that the East will lose more. Because the East – with all their experience, suffering caused by systems, mostly by communism, and prior to that, of course, also national socialism – the East has matured somehow (...), its proportion is different. I can see it, from my experience. In any case, this is how I explain to myself why they chose a Polish Pope – it is because in the East, certain things have become less relativised (...). If you live in a regime which is atheist by principle, you have a better grasp of what religion means. And there is one thing that you see clearer, which the man of the West cannot see. It is that God is the source of human freedom – the final, only, absolute, and definite source. This is what the man of the East sees. This is what a labour camp prisoner discerns. Meanwhile, the man of the West cannot see this, or cannot see it to such an extent”. When asked, what Central Europe and communist Europe could bring to the greater Europe, John Paul II judged that first and foremost it could contribute the identity of these nations: “These are nations that managed to maintain their identity, despite the whole Marxist transformation. Perhaps they even enhanced it in self-defence. Of course, this identity is expressed to a different extent, declared to a different extent, but in fact, in all these countries the struggle was between their national identity and internationalism, that is, blurring national identity for the sake of communism”. According to St. John Paul, bringing a nation’s identity to Europe, to the European Union, is the most important task of the Central European states. What does this national identity of Central European states entail? At its very foundation, it is still intrinsically linked with their roots – the embracing of Christian faith. They all embraced it from the same source, as a result of the evangelising mission of the Slavic apostles, Sts. Cyril and Methodius. God is the source of the highest value for Europeans, as God is the source of freedom, the key to democracy. An attempt to “free man from the thralldom” of God with the use of post-truth or post-facts is turning into a real defeat of Western Europe.

More than eleven centuries ago, Europe was undergoing an intellectual and spiritual confrontation between the Western, Germanic and Slavic worlds. The Greek brothers from Thessalonica, Sts. Cyril and Methodius, at the request of their ruler – the Byzantine Emperor Michael III – obeyed the Pope – the successor to St. Peter in Rome – and dedicated themselves entirely to the Slavic

nations in order to preach the Gospel among them, giving them full access to truth and wisdom. Constantine – St. Cyril – established a grammar for the Slavs so that they would be wise and “understand the things of God and man, and learn how to become in the image and likeness of their Creator through their actions”. Their mission and evangelising concept met with fundamental opposition from the Frankish clergy. St. Methodius spent two and a half years in a Bavarian prison, and after his death in 885 (St. Cyril died in Rome in 869), their disciples, as a result of the intrigues of the Frankish clergy, were banished from Great Moravia under dramatic circumstances, and the ideas of Sts. Cyril and Methodius were forcibly suppressed.

Nowadays, we are also witnessing the confrontation between two concepts of man and society: the concept of Western thought, i.e., the postmodern concept of post-truth that does not recognise man as a personal and spiritual subject, and the concept indicated by St. John Paul II: “The Christian concept of man, in the image of God, according to Greek theology, so beloved by Cyril and Methodius and expanded by St. Augustine, is the root of the peoples of Europe, and it must be invoked with love and good will in order to bring peace and serenity to the new era”. This concept, which is based on faith in the existence of the Triune God, is being rejected today as unscientific and even unfriendly to man.

In Europe, it is assumed in political and public life that God should not be talked about. In his speech at Krasieński Square in Warsaw on 6 July 2017, US President D. Trump showed that talking about God is obvious and natural. Europe needs leaders who are not afraid to say that the world is of a transcendent nature and that freedom is a moral category. St. John Paul II was convinced that the tears of the 20th century had prepared the Earth for a new spring of the human spirit: “Now is the time for new hope, which calls us to expel the paralysing burden of cynicism from the future of politics and of human life”.

Cultural differences and political reality show that it will be very difficult to integrate Europe if Western Europe does not abandon its hostile attitude towards Christian values. We vest our hopes in the activities of the Visegrad Group, believing that it will help to maintain unity. However, if we search only for political agreements, as everyday life shows, the chances of maintaining unity in the region of Central and Eastern Europe will be very low. The contem-

porary crisis of civilisation is inseparably connected with the crisis of faith. St. John Paul II taught in Gniezno in 1979 that “there will be no European unity until it is based on unity of the spirit”. The “Europe of the Carpathians” conferences are currently the only event where politicians, together with intellectuals and clergy, discuss the integration of Europe not only in political, economic and European security terms, but also in terms of the need for intellectual and spiritual reconstruction. The Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Mr. M. Kuchciński, should be thanked for this.

The Visegrad countries must decide whether they will join the German and French core of European Union integration as a “supermarket”, because this model is a “supermarket”, or whether they will create the core of the revival of the European Union based on Christian values, of which they are co-heirs, for the common good of Europe. This is the challenge for the Europe of the Carpathians and for the Visegrad Group.

Europe of our future

The plan to create a centre for strengthening cooperation between Central and Eastern European countries had been on the mind of politicians of the Law and Justice party for several years, but it was not until 2011 that specific organisational forms for that objective were created. Conferences in the “Europe of the Carpathians” series, usually organised in Przemyśl, Krasieczyn and Nowy Targ, as well as the annual Economic Forum in Krynica or Yaremche and Truskavets in Ukraine, enabled this plan to be implemented under the official patronage of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland. At a time when Law and Justice was a party in opposition and the government of the Civic Platform and the Polish People’s Party led to marginalisation of Polish aspirations in international politics, Marek Kuchciński, the then Deputy Marshal of the Sejm, found a way to build frameworks of regional cooperation independently and even against the renunciations of the then Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At a time when Poland was passively following the “mainstream” integration policy of the European Union, which in practice meant surrendering to German domination, the “Europe of the Carpathians”, conceived as an alternative to such a course, brought together experts, scholars, local government representatives and parliamentarians – at first from a few, and then from over a dozen Central and Eastern European countries. The aim of such meetings was to popularise the opinion that the Carpathian region deserved appreciation and European funds just like other areas which received large subsidies from Brussels, such as the Alps. Highlighting the meaning and needs of the Carpathian region became a pretext for organising meetings of representatives of countries, the geographical location of which did not cover these mountains even in the slightest.

This way, step by step, meeting by meeting, contacts which increasingly referred to the historical idea of Intermarium, were being systematically established. The meetings were attended by representatives of EU States as well as countries interested in joining this organisation (at that time Croatia became a member of the EU) and countries which were only interested in expanding cooperation within this region. Parliamentarians as well as speakers of cham-



Deputy Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland Ryszard Terlecki at the Local Development Forum in Ukraine, Truskavets, 23 June 2017 (persons in the photograph – see p. 176)

bers, leaders of parliamentary fractions, chairs of committees, etc. became more and more committed, which was in line with a postulate promoted by Law and Justice, consisting in enhancing the role of national parliaments in international politics, in particular in the face of the growing crisis in the European Union.

In 2015, Law and Justice won the parliamentary and presidential elections and thus took over the helm of foreign policy. This allowed Poland to regain an independent and strong position in Europe and the rest of the world. An energetic offensive in development of political and economic cooperation in the region was launched by Beata Szydło's government. At the same time, the President Andrzej Duda issued a proposal for meetings of Heads of States of the so-called Three Seas Initiative. The Polish Parliament was also able to become engaged on a much larger scale than before, while the Marshal of the Sejm Marek Kuchciński added a number of new initiatives to the work to date. A series of political successes, starting with the Warsaw Summit of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

(NATO) in 2016 to the historic visit of President Donald Trump in 2017, was an energetic boost to actions taken in Central and Eastern Europe. One of the most spectacular events from the parliamentary perspective were two regional Summits of the Speakers of Parliaments, organised in August 2016 and then in May 2017, the latter was participated by representatives of 24 countries. That way, thanks to cooperation of the President of the Republic of Poland and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as the Sejm and Senate, the idea of regional alliance began to take the form of a realistic political framework.

This idea, called the Idea of Intermarium, first defined as an alliance of countries located between Russia and Germany, and then seen as a broader agreement covering Central and Eastern Europe, has a long history. Some Polish historians and political scientists consider that the idea stems from the Polish-Lithuanian Union, whereas others see its origin in the plans for the Commonwealth of Three Nations. It was prince Adam Czartoryski who wrote a book on the Intermarium concept, which was referred to later during the January uprising. Its supporter before WWI and in the times of the Second Polish Republic was Marshal Józef Piłsudski. During WWII, the Polish-Czechoslovak federation, which remained the objective of the Prime Minister Władysław Sikorski but could not be achieved due to Stalin's objection, was supposed to be a part of that plan. After the war, the establishment of Intermarium was being announced by the politicians in exile, refugees from the part of Europe which as a result of the Yalta agreement was subordinated to the Soviets. Meetings and consultations devoted to this cause were attended by representatives of over a dozen states. The establishment of a regional alliance in Central and Eastern Europe was an important element of the programmes of Polish pro-independence emigrants from the end of WWII to the times of "Solidarity", the round table and Autumn of Nations in 1989. The project of Intermarium (The Three Seas Initiative) has been returning in various versions and political configurations since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The initial condition securing the project's success is construction of a North-South communication axis (from Tallin to Thessaloniki and Ankara, with side routes to Ukraine, the Czech Republic, Moldova and the Balkans), which so far has been neglected, including the Via Caprathia highway, other direct roads, high-speed railway lines, waterways, border crossing points, air services, gas pipelines. Its economical importance as well as impact on the development and wealth of regions it will cover are obvious. However, its military meaning should also be appreciated. Trade cooperation should be complemented by cultural and



Dunajec Castle in Niedzica, in the background: Czorsztyn Castle

scientific collaboration, especially since this region has highly distinctive features which make it stand out against Western Europe. It is worth naming at least the most important ones.

Firstly, contrary to the Western policy of multiculturalism, which decides not to develop culture based on Christian tradition and pretends to assimilate newcomers from other continents, nations and states of the Central and Eastern Europe are much more focused on cultivating their own history, cultures and identities. Secondly, they have accepted the presence of religion in public life – both in the past, in rich and diverse Christian tradition as well as other religions, and in the present, in relations between state institutions, churches and communities of different faiths – much more than the Western countries do. Thirdly, having experienced years of occupation and foreign domination, the inhabitants of this

region emphasise the desire for independence and sovereignty much more. The resilience to the promotion of the leftist ideology, which is disseminated in the West, promotes family breakdown and destruction of national community, destroys attachment to tradition and religion, pushes forward social pathologies and various deviations, is much greater. These differences with regard to the richest states of Western Europe, especially Germany and France, form the basis for establishment of closer cooperation between partners in our part of Europe.

The future of the entire continent depends on the cooperation of all European countries, just as the future of the European Union depends not only on the chosen and the strongest, but on all its members. Today, we are facing the choice of the path towards the future. The uncontrolled influx of immigrants from Africa, South Asia and Middle East, helplessness of democratic procedures against

2nd Summit of Speakers of Central and Eastern European Parliaments, Warsaw, 17–18 May 2017 (persons in the photograph – see p. 176)



terrorist threats, weakness of European Union institutions, which are powerless against the crisis caused by the United Kingdom's intention to leave the EU, lack of solidarity and effective reaction to Russia's aggression towards Ukraine, growing reluctance to further integration among a part of European public opinion – all these matters constitute the largest crisis in the history of the European Union. It is possible to overcome it, but it depends mainly on the will and determination of the Europeans themselves. Europe will plunge into chaos and conflict, and the European civilization will disappear if ideas promoted by leftist propagandists of anti-Christian ideologies, counter-cultural obsessions or customs-related pathologies prevail. Europe will fail if political correctness causing the destruction of the nation, family, tradition and communities built around Christian values are victorious. Resistance to these phenomena in the West is growing, but it is still not strong enough to stop the pressure of nihilism, the cult of money, the acceptance of corruption, the affirmation of growing social differences, the temptations of globalism, suicidal demographic engineering, the promotion of various aberrations. Before Western Europe wakes up, its eastern part has the chance to create an important front for defending the successful future of our continent. Central and Eastern Europe can contribute to restoration of the importance of these values which will provide all Europeans with new perspectives for economic, cultural and civilisation growth.

“Europe of the Carpathians” – a common project of Central and Eastern European states

The origin of the “Europe of the Carpathians” initiative

The “Europe of the Carpathians” initiative was born at the turn of 1999–2000, when the freshly created Podkarpackie Voivodeship kick-started the “Green Carpathians” project at the inspiration of the then voivode. The aim of the initiative was to expand the Polish-Slovak-Ukrainian cooperation. Already at that time attention was focused not only on the need for sustainable development of the regions of Central and Eastern Europe (Polish voivodeships among them) but also to the necessity of implementing a “balance between economy and ecology” policy. Two important reasons for the creation of this cross-border initiative were the increasing drinking water shortage and the enormous damage to the mountainous areas and the surrounding foothills caused by a flood. These problems occurred in all the Carpathian states and Poland is one of the European states that are most susceptible to them – especially the voivodeships located in the Vistula river basin. Clearer features of the “Europe of the Carpathians” initiative emerged after the preparation of the convention of 22 May 2003 entitled *Framework convention on the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians*, that was signed in Kiev. The convention became the fundamental act constituting the cooperation in the Carpathians region. Seven countries: the Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Ukraine and Hungary, using the Alpine Convention as an example, adopted a model of sustainable development for the Carpathians. The prevailing conviction was that Carpathians are a unique area in Europe, requiring international cooperation. Regardless of national boundary lines, the problems, needs and interests of the people living in the Carpathian towns and villages are universal in nature. The “Europe of the Carpathians” initiative was aimed at increasing the developmental potential of the region defined as a borderland that was still shaking off the effects of

communism and was the planned area of enlargement of the European Union to include Central European countries.

The Carpathian Convention defined the geographical scope of the region, granting to Carpathian states the right to freely delineate its borders. Therefore, the criteria taken into consideration were not historical, geographic or economic in nature. According to a sovereign decision of individual countries, the cross-border Carpathian region came to include, in a geographical sense, hills, foothills, plains and valleys. The signatories have committed themselves to protect the diversity in biology, landscape and culture of the region, as well as to adopt a coordinated spatial planning policy. They have also chosen the most important areas of cooperation: infrastructure and services, use of natural resources, environmental protection, agriculture, forestry, national heritage and traditional knowledge.

The meeting of parliamentarians from Carpathian states organized in November 2007 in Warsaw marked the end of the first phase in the development of Carpathian cooperation. The meeting was called at the initiative of Mr. Marek Kuchciński, the then chairman of the Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry Committee of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland.

Institutionalization of the “Europe of the Carpathians” initiative

Between 2007 and 2011 the “Europe of the Carpathians” initiative was institutionalized on the social and organizational level. As a result of the actions of Member of Parliament Marek Kuchciński, the project became the focal point for an international community of politicians, experts, scientists and members of local governments, who all agreed to expand the scope of Carpathian cooperation. In the years 2003 to 2007 the scope of the cooperation was set up by the Carpathian Convention that referred to administrative units located within the Carpathian region. However, between 2007 a 2011 a new trend started to dominate. It was proposed that discussions about subregional cooperation between Carpathian states should begin, as these states were distinguished by a unique geopolitical setting, possessed a Central European political identity and national values established through historical processes that took place in the space between Germany and Russia. It was a clear extension of the political formu-



Professor Waldemar Paruch at the panel “Achievements and deficits of democracy: 25 years of experience of Central and Eastern Europe”, Conference “Europe of the Carpathians”, Krynica-Zdrój, 8 September 2016 (persons on the photograph – see p. 177)

la of the project that resulted from the political thrust of the Law and Justice (PiS) party. Moreover, it was deeply rooted in the convictions of President Lech Kaczyński. For PiS, developing of multidimensional cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe was a very important means of increasing the status of Poland in the international environment. The main effect of that cooperation was supposed to be the increased ability of Central European countries to participate in the decision processes of the European Union and the enhancement of their defenses against Russian penetration as well as against being dependent on German economic interests.

The institutionalization of the “Europe of the Carpathians” initiative meant a shift in thinking of the geographic environment. Rivers, valleys, mountains, and natural resources were more than just a reason for political conflict and

competition between countries in the past. This region has always been subject to an interweaving pattern of different influences and cultural, religious, and ethnic pulls. It was those influences that shaped the unique character of Central and Eastern Europe with its diversity and richness. According to this way of thinking, Carpathians unite, instead of dividing the people of the region. They encourage operation not only between local communities living in these mountains but also between the Carpathian countries themselves.

The II International Conference “Europe of the Carpathians” was planned to take place in 2010. However, because of the crash of the Polish presidential plane in Smolensk, it was postponed until the following year. It eventually took place on 26 February 2011 in Przemyśl. It was held under a parliamentary for-

Carpathian region





Health Resort in Krynica-Zdrój during the Economic Forum

mula (the main organizer was the lower chamber of the Polish Parliament – the Sejm, specifically the Parliamentary Carpathian Committee, together with support from the Polish Senate), but also saw participants from multiple domains (members of local governments, NGO representatives, scientists) – on the one hand creating the basic foundations for cooperation between Carpathian countries’ parliamentarians, and on the other hand being a space for intellectual and expert debate on Central and Eastern Europe, with a particular focus on the Carpathian region.

In 2011 the International “Europe of the Carpathians” conference was for the first time a part of the Economic Forum at Krynica-Zdrój. Thus, it became a part of one of the most important initiatives for European cooperation. The conference adopted the Carpathian memorandum – the first document that pointed toward a necessity of creating a Carpathian strategy which would have



Participants of the 13th International Conference “Europe of the Carpathians”, Smerek, 25–26 July 2015. Trip to „Chatka Puchatka” mountain refuge, Wetlińska Meadow

not only a local and international dimension, but also a European one. It was suggested that the Carpathian strategy should become an instrument of macro-regional policy of the European Union according to the rules of sustainable growth and subsidiarity. In that way “Carpathian Europe” achieved two levels of importance. First, Carpathian states that are the European Union Member States decided to develop their own subregional strategy around that project, in order to resolve problems of one of the poorest regions of the EU. The idea was to use EU instruments employed in other cross-border areas of the Union, taking the Alpine strategy as an example. Secondly, the Carpathian project was a vehicle for cooperation with neighbors of the EU, namely Ukraine and Serbia. It seemed a form of cooperation crossing the external borders of the EU and was supposed to ease the accession process of the aforementioned countries into the European community. Social, professional, and political communities were

systematically invited to participate in the discussion. Moreover, the neighbors of the region – the Baltic and Caucasian countries – were invited as well.

Recurring international conferences organized between 2011 and 2017 in, among other places, Krynica-Zdrój and Krasieczyn, were the main organizational form of the “Europe of the Carpathians” initiative and means of parliamentary diplomacy. They were meeting places for politicians from Central and Eastern Europe, for intellectuals, Carpathian state and local government officials, NGO representatives, and experts from multiple domains. The patron, initiator, and at the same time main organizer of these conferences was Mr. Marek Kuchciński, the chairman of the Parliamentary Carpathian Committee, at first simultaneously serving as Deputy Marshal (2010–2015) and then Marshal of the Sejm. When Mr. Marek Kuchciński was appointed the Marshal of the Sejm, the “Europe of the Carpathians” initiative received a much wider context than before. First, the new Polish government started to develop parliamentary diplomacy, incorporating it as an important element of foreign policy-making. A sign of this change was the enormous international activity of Marshal M. Kuchciński. Secondly, the ruling Law and Justice party made Central and Eastern Europe a priority area for its foreign policy. The effects of that activity were:

- revitalization of the Visegrad Group thanks to which it became an important entity in international politics, especially within the EU;
- the “Three Seas” initiative presented to 11 Central European countries by President Andrzej Duda; its aim is to boost economic, energy and infrastructural cooperation of the states of the region;
- the organization of four parliamentary summits of Central and Eastern European states in Warsaw between 2016 and 2019. The goal of these summits was to create a multilateral formula of parliamentary consultations between the countries that constitute this geopolitical area, regardless of their affiliation, or lack thereof, to international organizations.

The thematic scope of Carpathian conferences was systematically expanded. Between 2011 and 2012 the topics of cross-border and international cooperation of European countries in the mountainous regions, chiefly the Carpathians, dominated the discourse. The second International Conference in Nowy Targ, entitled “Europe rich with the Carpathians” was the forum of discussion about

the application of the Carpathian Convention in the context of Euroregions, the development policies of mountainous areas, the build-up of infrastructure in the region, tourism and energy cooperation, and the operations of Carpathian spas. Tangible successes were noted in that period. The notion of the “Carpathian brand” was introduced into social communication and preliminary identified. During a meeting in Yaremche in 2012 it was decided to approach the Polish-Ukrainian Parliamentary Assembly for support in the next stages of rebuilding of the Astronomical and Meteorological observatory on the peak of the Pip Ivan (located in the Chornohora range in the Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast) and to create a Polish-Ukrainian Academic Youth Meeting Center in Mykulychyn close to Yaremche. It is a joint initiative of the Ciscarpathian University in Ivano-Frankivsk and the University of Warsaw.

2013 saw the introduction of comprehensive proposals – the first of them called on the EU to adopt the “Carpathian Horizon 2020” operational program and the second called for an establishment of a trans-European communications route called Via Carpathia. The “Europe of the Carpathians” conference of that time was organized with a goal of a broad significance – *“Carpathians for Europe”*. *What can Carpathian countries contribute to Europe?* New goals were being set: closer political cooperation (parliamentary cooperation included) of Carpathian countries, strengthening of political and economic ties; presenting the Carpathian point of view on many strategic problems facing Europe. A way to do that was to deepen the organizational institutionalization of Carpathian cooperation, formulated in the years 2012–2013, by a construction of a parliamentary network (Parliamentary Carpathian Groups, together with the Inter-parliamentary Assembly of Central and Eastern Europe). The project to create a Carpathian parliamentary network was accompanied by intellectual and scientific initiatives as well – there was a series of trainings titled “Carpathian University” and the compendium under the name of “Carpathian Encyclopedia” was created.

These priorities were expanded between 2014 and 2015. The topic of the geopolitical significance of the Carpathian region was also tackled, and 2014 saw the Krynica Declaration, where Ukraine was given full support in the conflict with Russia. At the same time the policy of remaining passive in the face of aggression was rejected and the declaration called for the defense of European

rights and values. New directions were also chosen – reflection and cooperation in order to improve security of the region. The “Europe of the Carpathians” initiative started exhibiting a significant ability to adapt. The titles of panels from the 2015 conference were very characteristic: “Threats and opportunities for cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe within the framework of a revival of geopolitics”; “Nation states as a value and guardians (guarantors) of a diverse Carpathian Europe”; “Carpathians without borders – protecting culture and anticipating dreams”; “The Carpathian brand and its future strategy”; “Carpathian economy and environmental protection. Achieving a compromise”; “Infrastructure and investments in the Carpathians – needs, projects and perspectives”.

Snow-clad Astronomical and Meteorological Observatory “White Elephant”, Pip Ivan Mountain, Chornohora, Ukraine





Participants of the Conference “Europe of the Carpathians”, Krynica-Zdrój, 5–6 September 2012 (persons in the photograph – see p. 177)

“Europe of the Carpathians” conferences organized between 2014 and 2015 provided the initiative with an impetus of strategic importance and decided on its future development.

During the 2017 “Europe of the Carpathians” conference in Przemyśl, one of the discussed topics was the strategy for sustainable growth. It was the Polish suggestion to transform the economic model of the Carpathian states and the entire region. The goal of a remodeled economy was to discard the imitative and dependent model of development, executed at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, in order to make way for innovativeness, reindustrialization and modernization. A premise adopted at the Conference was that these processes could be put in motion not only at the scale of one country or a group of countries, but that they were possible on a regional scale as well. Such synergy would definitively empower the political potential of Central Europe and the resilience of Eastern Europe against dependence from Russia.

A declaration was adopted in Przemyśl (The Przemyśl Declaration): *On the way to sustainable development – the basics of the European macroeconomic strategy towards the Carpathians*. The declaration codified the most important rules on which the “Europe of the Carpathians” project was based, within a new political environment:

- Cooperation of independent nation states of Central and Eastern Europe, of an international and cross-border character, executed in multiple dimensions: presidential, governmental, parliamentary and local. Recognizing the Visegrad Four as a representative of the interests of the region within the EU. Supporting a renewal of the EU in the spirit of its fundamental values, Christianity among them.
- Strengthening the Carpathian cooperation through the realization of specific strategic goals. Firstly, taking coordinated measures to make the EU adopt the Carpathian strategy. Secondly, creating an infrastructural North–South axis that is invaluable when it comes to increasing the economic co-

Eastern Carpathians, Romania





Unveiling of the monuments to Henryk Sławik and József Antall senior, Budapest, 26 June 2017 (persons in the photograph – see p. 177)

hesion of the region and its communication accessibility. The desire was proclaimed to deepen the level of the institutionalization through organization of conferences of Carpathian parliamentary groups and a Carpathian economic forum.

At the “Europe of the Carpathians” conference at the XXVI Economic Forum in Krynica-Zdrój that took place on 7–8 September 2016, the discussions encompassed strategic questions of regional, continental, as well as global scale. Such a meaningful solution stemmed from the changes in the international community, through which Central Europe has clearly become a focal point for the world order because of the foreign policies of Russia, Germany, and China; the EU Crisis; the rising status of Turkey; Brexit; and the dynamic features of the region in many domains. The discussion panels during the conference

at Krynica-Zdrój encompassed many different topics: “The Visegrad Group – contemporary challenges, new forms of cooperation”; “Carpathians and their neighbors: from a unity of values to common interests”; “ABC, Carpathian Europe as the regional center between the seas: Adriatic, Baltic and Black”; “The intellectual faces of Central and Eastern Europe”; “The achievements and deficits of democracy: 25 years of Central and Eastern Europe experiences”; “Carpathian strategy – a concept for the development of a macro-region in Central

Bieszczady Mountains in the summer, Tarnica Massif





1st Summit of Speakers of Central and Eastern European Parliaments, Warsaw, 31 August 2016 (persons in the photograph – see p. 178)

and Eastern Europe”; “The Carpathian region: opportunities and challenges for tourism”; “Sustainable development of Carpathian Europe: infrastructure, culture, environment, and resources”. The complexity of the subject of the conference exhibited the spectrum of problems that were in the scope of interest of the organizers and participants of the “Europe of the Carpathians” project. Undoubtedly, the project that started as a cross-border initiative aimed at environmental protection has since developed into a political one of international importance, as well as a strategic concept with a great scope and wide reach.

The “Europe of the Carpathians” initiative has gradually expanded the sphere of its influence on both Carpathian entrepreneurs and intellectuals, as well as on Baltic and Caucasian states’ politicians. It has been increasingly clear that the initiative has grown into a broad political project of organizing coop-

eration between countries of Central and Eastern Europe, regardless of their participation in the European Union. This direction was confirmed at the XIX “Europe of the Carpathians” Conference organized on 5–7 September 2017 as a part of the XXVII Economic Forum in Krynica-Zdrój with over 300 participants. It may be assumed that at the conference the strategic line for the following editions in the years 2017–2019 was adopted.

The works of the XIX Conference were organized around three substantive spheres: continental (Europe), regional (Central Europe), and subregional (the Carpathians). Particular interest was attached to the situation in Europe resulting from the European Union crisis and the imperial policy of the Russian Federation. The future of Europe was considered in the context of: institutional crisis of the EU bodies; projects of political reconstruction of the EU; the dynamics of the migration crisis; opportunities and threats related to adopting the euro currency; security at the “NATO’s eastern flank”; the development of the Three Seas Initiative. The title of one panel was particularly suggestive: “Will the Central and Eastern Europe protect the civilization of the West?” Two grand issues were there discussed: (1) European fundamental values and political identity in the conditions of “the West’s dusk” and the development of the multiculturalism ideology and (2) the problem of expansion of courts and tribunals into the sphere of politics versus the parliaments’ role in laying down the political order in a state ruled by law. Thus, the “Europe of the Carpathians” clearly expanded its significance as a forum for the exchange of views on the intellectual face of modern Europe, by formulating the postulate of defending the European identity in the circumstances of rivalry between civilizations and cultures. A feature of European identity is, i.a., parliamentarism.

The debate was significantly influenced by the decisions of the North Atlantic Treaty Summit which took place in Warsaw in 2016, where essential military strengthening of Central European states was agreed – Poland, Romania, Lithuania and Latvia – through the deployment of NATO forces and units of the U.S. Army in their territories. As a result of challenges in the field of security, “Europe of the Carpathians” not only became a project on international cooperation for regional development, but also for security and stability. Two conclusions could be drawn from the discussions held at the XIX Conference: firstly, the expansion and deepening of the EU crisis is a consequence of abandoning

values on which the Union was built; secondly, the community of the Carpathian states' interests and values is sometimes perceived in Western Europe as competitive to the European integration; such diagnosis was considered false.

At the subregional level, at the conference the development policy of the Carpathian region in a comparative perspective was reviewed (panel "The policy of development of Europe's regions"), emphasizing the significance of the two investments: Via Carpathia and Rail Baltica. Also, the establishment of Collegium Carpathicum was declared – a project involving schools of higher learning of the Visegrad Group as well as Romania and Ukraine. Its symbolic seat was chosen – the Astronomical and Meteorological observatory on the peak of the Pip Ivan in the Chornohora range. Collegium Carpathicum is to conduct research of the Carpathian region and to intensify the contacts between schools of higher learning located there. Moreover, cooperation between cities of "Eu-

Unveiling of the monuments to Polish Lancer and Hungarian Huszár soldier by the Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland Marek Kuchciński and the Speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly László Kövér, Przemyśl, 10 September 2016





Signing an agreement concerning the most important infrastructural projects in the region of Central-Eastern Europe during of the Conference “Europe of the Carpathians”, in Krynica -Zdrój in 2018. The signatories: ministers from Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Ukraine

rope of the Carpathians” was initiated: Krynica-Zdrój, Przemyśl, Ružomberok, Sárospatak, and Truskavets.

The XX Conference took place on 17 February 2018 in Przemyśl. Its special character was not only a result of the jubilee of “Europe of the Carpathians” series, but also of the commencement of celebrations of the centenary of the Fall of Nations in Central Europe. The discussions were held in five panels: “Parliamentary traditions in Central and Eastern Europe”; “The future of the European Union – national experiences and goals”; “Local government cooperation”; “Presentation of Carpathian initiatives – 100 initiatives for the centenary of the renaissance of Poland”; “Cooperation of Carpathian universities”. During the conference, an exhibition was held presenting the output of the editions of “Europe of the Carpathians” organized thus far as well as a commemorative medal Europa Carpathium was proffered. Explaining the symbolism of the medal, Marshal of the Sejm Marek Kuchciński pointed to the historic ancestry

of regional cooperation and stressed that the presumption for the “Europe of the Carpathians” initiative was – by referring to nature, tradition and history – demonstrating the region’s potential and providing it with new dynamics. In order to achieve this goal, the initiative was anchored in parliamentary cooperation, as the parliaments represent Central-European nations.

Between 2018 and 2019 two consecutive editions of “Europe of the Carpathians” were organized: XXI (5–6 September 2018 in Krynica-Zdrój) and XXII (16–17 February 2019 in Krasiczyn). There, the subject matter formulated at the XIX conference was elaborated on. The new dimension of “Europe of the Carpathians” in this period became the presentation of the heroes of this part of Europe (panel at the XXI Conference “Common heroes of freedom”) and proposing the idea of establishing the Parliamentary Assembly of Central and Eastern Europe (panel at the XXII Conference “Intermarium? Three Seas? The idea of a Parliamentary Assembly of Central and Eastern Europe”).

“Europe of the Carpathians” – the center of Central and Eastern Europe

The changes that took place in Europe between 1989 and 1991 initiated the process of reconstructing of Central European identities and reestablishment of the subjectivity of the states of the region. As a result of the two world wars which began as a conflict over Central Europe, its status has since been changed. The period after WWI saw the emergence of nation states, while the one after the WWII was a time when the communist order was installed in the region. However, the biggest tragedy was the demise of local homelands shaped through centuries of coexistence of different communities. The threats came from the outside – the imperial policies of superpowers, communism and fascism. For centuries, external threats had been a result of an objective factor – the strategic geopolitical location of Central Europe. It had been recognized by European powers in almost all historical epochs, beginning with the Middle Ages until modern times (e.g., Austria, Sweden, and Turkey in the 17th century, Napoleonic France, united Germany, tsarist Russia in the 19th century). Imperial policies of the empires as well as Russian and German totalitarianism, together with the lack of stable cooperation between the independent countries of this

part of the continent, caused the fall of Central Europe. Rebuilding the importance and identity of the region was a very important factor when it came to influencing the processes that were going on in Eastern Europe, invigorating the tendencies to be independent of Russia. It became especially important in the context of the imperial policy of Russia and the aggression on Georgia and the Ukraine that were an outcome of that.

The Carpathians are important not only because of their cultural, social and environmental significance, but they also have a very specific cross-border char-

Geostrategic significance of the region of Europe of the Carpathians

Source: J. Bartosiak, Rzeczpospolita między lądem a morzem. O wojnie i pokoju, Warszawa 2018, p. 387.



Budapest, Hungary



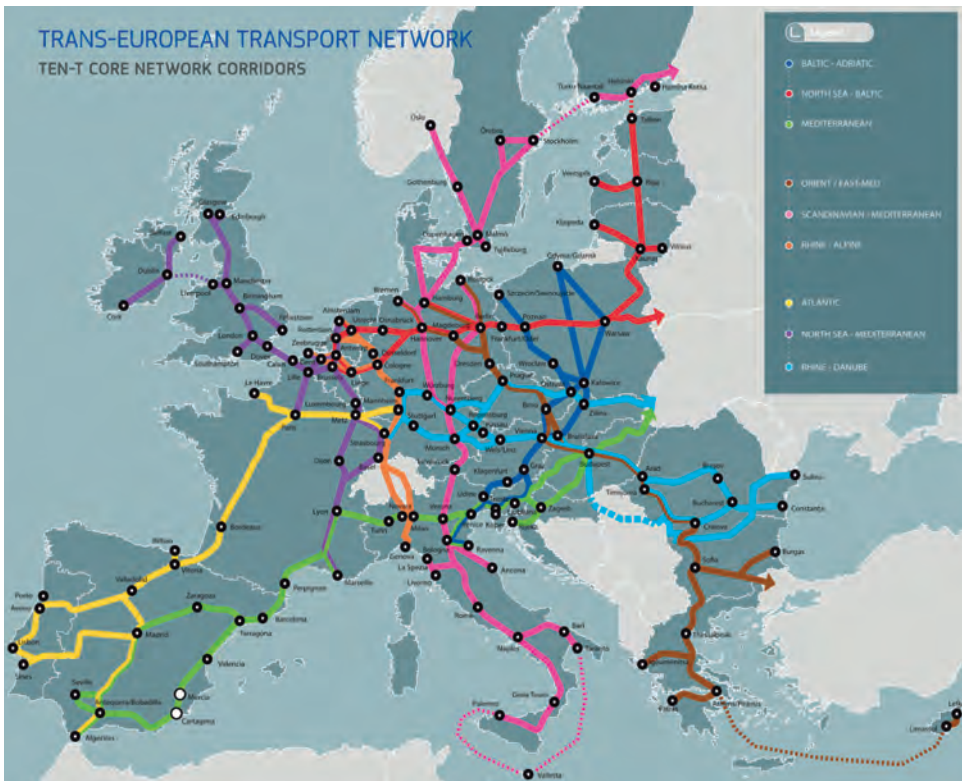


acter and a major communicational significance. Moreover, they are a region of exceptional strategic importance as well. They are the core of Central Europe and are located in its center. The North-South axis leads through the mountains, shielding the West-East axis. The Carpathians divide Central Europe, but they are also the unifying force of the southern and northern parts of this area. During war times, the Carpathian range shielded the South of Europe from Eastern invasions (Mongols, Tatars, Huns, Russians) and shielded the North from the South (the Turks). Additionally, it isolated the communities from the two sides of the mountains from themselves, creating ample conditions for cultural diversity first, and for the creation of small nations second.

Contemporary Central and Eastern European states are facing important historical challenges caused by the threat posed by Russian policy on the east-

Map of the Trans-European Transport Networks TEN-T project

Source: European Commission's website, <http://ec.europa.eu> [accessed: 10 June 2019].





Via Carpatia route on the north-south axis

Source: Rosik P. et al., Wplyw korytarza transportowego Via Carpatia...; Final report on the project for the Ministry of Infrastructure and Construction, Institute of Geography and Spatial Organization Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw 2017.

ern flank, and by the influx of migrants on the southern one; through the expansion of the European Union and the NATO that divides the region into two camps, and through the crisis of European institutions and rising euroscepti-

cism. The expanded cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe is a *sine qua non* condition for the protection of the political identity of the region, execution of state interests and the strengthening of the subjectivity of sovereign states.

Central and Eastern Europe is constituted not only through a geographic criterion but also through historical and political determinants. From a historical standpoint, the main cultural features of the region developed in the 14th and 15th centuries when sovereign state monarchies were established and when regional integration processes started materializing – namely the Polish-Lithuanian union, and the Scandinavian and Hungarian-Croatian ones. Political thinking about Central and Eastern Europe as a region that is lying between the Adriatic, Baltic and Black Seas started to crystallize in the first decades of the 20th century. It was an answer to the German concept of *Mitteleuropa*, Russian panslavism, and international bolshevism. The aforementioned concepts all assumed that this region had to be conquered, or at the very least made a subject to higher powers. It entailed economic exploitation or a dependent and imitative type of development. At times of crisis, Central Europe received

GDP per capita, including the purchase power of the Carpathian states (EU-28=100) against the EU average

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/GDP_per_capita,_consumption_per_capita_and_price_level_indices, [accessed: 26 July 2019].

Country\year	2004	2007	2010	2013	2015	2016	2017	2018	2004–2018 Observed change in %
UE 28	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	
Czech Republic	78	82	83	84	87	88	89	90	12
Hungary	61	60	64	67	68	67	68	70	9
Poland	50	53	62	67	69	68	70	71	21
Romania	34	43	52	55	57	59	63	64	30
Slovakia	57	67	74	77	77	77	76	78	21
Serbia	30	33	36	38	36	39	39	40	10
Ukraine	23	25	23	25	21*	20	20	21	-2

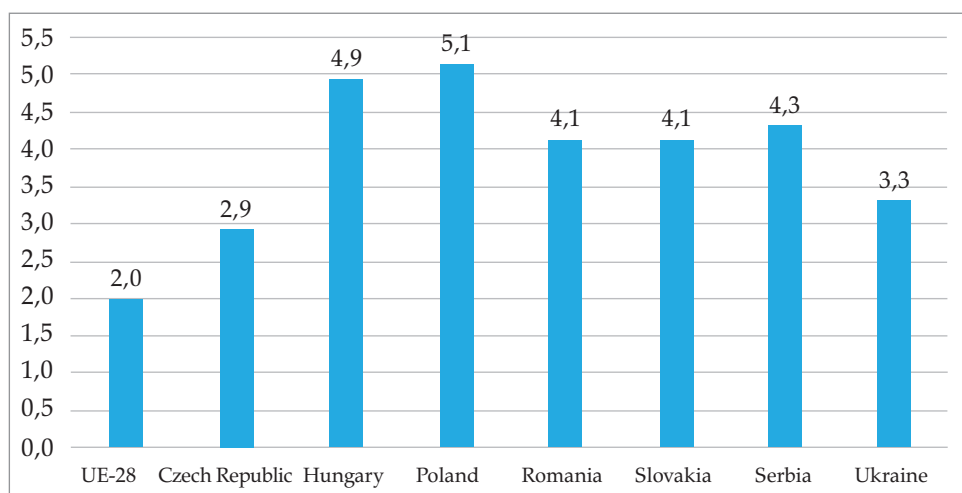
many migrants from Western Europe (Jews, Germans) substantially increasing the plurality of the local homelands and contributing to the multiethnic and multi-religious character of the Carpathians, in regions such as Transylvania, Carpathian Ruthenia and Galicia.

There are 30 countries in Central and Eastern Europe located between Germany and Russia, lying along the North-South axis. What they all have in common is:

1. a feeling of being a borderland in a political and cultural sense comparing to the West;
2. a recollection of lost independence and sovereignty to superpowers;
3. a strong presence of topics such as freedom, independence and the nation in public debate;
4. the perception of nations as ethnic and cultural communities;
5. independent absorption and modernization of political and philosophical trends created in Western Europe;
6. the fluidity of state entities and the borders between them;
7. underexploited national potential (dependent development) in comparison with past periods of glory.

Real GDP growth in the Carpathian states is 2018

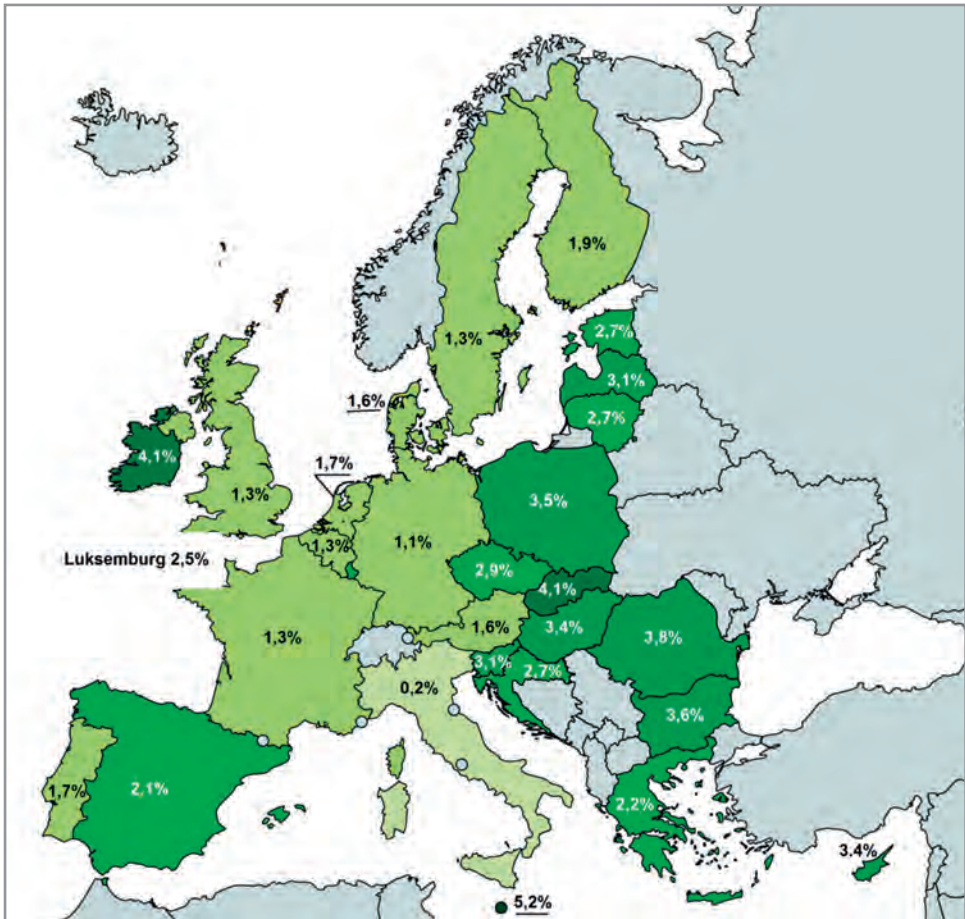
Source: <https://knoema.com/atlas/Ukraine/Real-GDP-gro-wth>, [accessed: 4 May 2019].



Considering only the Carpathian states, important conclusions may be drawn, including those related to economy. In the 21st century, against other European states, this region has displayed an exceptional dynamics, as measured by the increase in the GDP in comparison with the average for all the EU states, as well as GDP per capita in the context of making up for historical delays in comparison with Western Europe.

It was Carpathian Europe where the borderlands mentality has emerged. An important element of that mentality is a seemingly easy shift from a tolerance of

Estimated GDP growth in 2019 according to the European Commission's forecasts (February 2019)
Source: Obserwator Gospodarczy website, <http://obserwatorgospodarczy.pl/mapy-i-wykresy> [accessed: 26 June 2019].

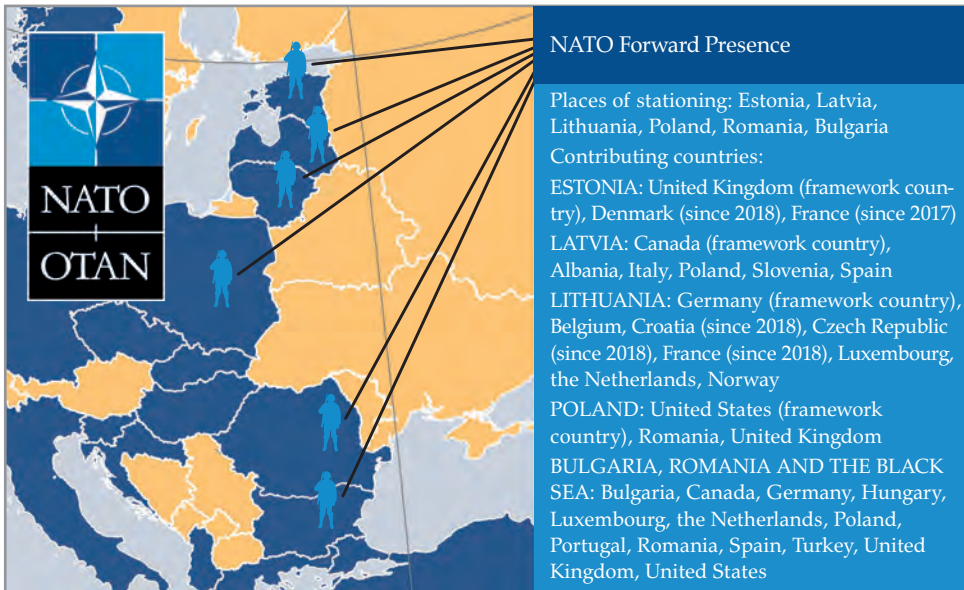


your neighbor that is ethnically different to a competitive stance, visible clearly during war times. The most dramatic were experiences of the wars in the 18th and 20th centuries, firstly resulting in major migrations within the region as a reaction to the change of boundaries and political rule, and then taking the form of organized ethnic and religious crimes. The effect of those processes was the contemporary fall of local homelands established in the Middle Ages and the modern era.

More than 150 million people live in Central and Eastern Europe. They create a majority group within the European Union whose members (16 out of 28 Member States) have in 2018 jointly added more than 4 billion USD to the GDP of the EU which accounted for 17,5% of the Union’s total. Such potential is a relatively significant asset in the internal policy of the EU and the NATO, as well as the external one toward the Russian Federation and the People’s Republic of China. It makes Central Europe the second pillar of European integration, right after the Western one. However, one condition needs to be fulfilled for that to happen – Central Europe needs to create multiple network connections

NATO Forward Presence on the eastern flank

Source: Own elaboration based on data from NATO’s website, <https://www.nato.int> [accessed: 26 June 2019].





The castle in Krasiczyn

with Eastern Europe, because the potential of an isolated Central Europe is too small to counterbalance the affluence of Western Europe. It is especially true when it comes to the discussion about the shape European integration should take and the framework of the transatlantic cooperation, as well as the stance toward Russia.

The “Europe of the Carpathians” initiative is one of the platforms of regional cooperation that should be harmoniously connected to the other projects inspired by the *Intermarium concept* or the *ABC Region* idea (the Adriatic, Baltic and Black sea). Most importantly, with the presidential “Three Seas Initiative”.



The strength of the “Europe of the Carpathians” initiative lies in its reliance on particular interests, transit routes, social needs, environmental cohesion and the ability to cooperate. Carpathians today no longer only mark the borders and they do not divide Central and Eastern Europe, but are a factor for community building. The execution of the “Europe of the Carpathians” initiative has led to an overcoming of the definition of the Carpathians in a strictly geographic sense, and gave them a social, political, cultural and economic meaning.

Central and Eastern Europe is also a key element of the security system in Europe. The Russian aggression in Ukraine in 2014 changed the way of thinking



László E. Varga, Hungarian historian, retired researcher at the University of the Reformed Church in Budapest, during the lecture “Common heroes of freedom” at the “Europe of the Carpathians” conference in Krasieczyn in 2019

about the region within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Its strategic significance was noticed. After the NATO summits in Newport (2014) and Warsaw (2016), the states of the Carpathian region ceased to be the members of the organization with limited rights: without an allied military presence and without an extensive military infrastructure. The presence of allied forces in the Baltic states is aimed at protecting this outer area, and owing to geographical reasons, the key countries for the security of entire Europe are Poland and Romania, divided by a 150-kilometer mountain range of the Carpathians. In accordance with the provisions of the Warsaw summit, one of four battalion battle groups is based in Poland, the rest of which are present in three other Baltic states; in Romania, there are forces of the so-called Tailored Forward Presence of the NATO. Thus, the level of security of Central Europe acquired a new quality, which fact undoubtedly significantly strengthened the political potential of the Carpathian states and the whole region.

Regional cooperation of the “Europe of the Carpathians” countries

The European Union should be seen as the most comprehensive peace project within the last seventy years. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, Central Europe countries focused, apart from Euro-Atlantic aspirations, on regional cooperation and good neighbour relations.

Hungary contributed considerably to establishment of the Carpathian Euroregion in 1993, which comprises 19 administrative units from five countries, i.e. Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania and Hungary. One of the common characteristics of the region is its lower level of economic development, resulting from i.a. its peripheral location. Despite diversity of languages and nationalities, common history and geographical location provide excellent conditions for better understanding and increased economic productivity.

After years of intense preparations, in 2003 seven countries, i.e. Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine, signed the Carpathian Convention in Kiev. The Convention states that the Carpathians are a unique and exceptionally beautiful natural treasure with extraordinary ecological value and constitute an important biodiversity reserve.

As a parliamentarian from Zemplén county (North-Eastern Hungary) from 1990 and a former mayor of Sárospatak, I fully agree with the objectives of the said Convention and strongly support cooperation within the Carpathian Euroregion. I believe that in order to intensify our future work we need a common vision resulting from political leadership and fully supported by the stakeholders. A common vision that protects sustainable development of the Carpathian region and ensures improvements in the quality of life.

In this context, for the first time I had an opportunity to participate in the conference entitled “Europe of the Carpathians” in 2012 which took place in a renaissance castle in Krasiczyn. Starting from that conference, upon the invitation of the Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland Marek Kuchciński, I have become a regular guest at subsequent conferences organised in Krasiczyn



Conference “Europe of the Carpathians”. From the left: Vice-President of the Senate of the Czech Republic Přemysl Sobotka, Chair of the Management Board of RAIC Presov, former deputy of the National Council of the Slovak Republic and former MEP Ján Hudacký, Chair of the European Union Affairs Committee of the Hungarian National Assembly Richard Hörsik, Przemysław, 27 February 2016

or in Krynica-Zdrój. The members of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland and of the National Assembly of Hungary met in Sárospatak, my constituency, where they held animated discussions on further possibilities of cooperation in education and culture. The meeting took place in November 2013 and provided a unique opportunity to present and taste genuine local agricultural products, such as Tokay wines.

As the Chairman of the Committee on European Affairs of the National Assembly of Hungary, I pointed out to important issues during the discussion on potential methods of cooperation in the Carpathians, e.g. on financing of the flagship infrastructural projects of the region, i.e. Via Carpathia, the North-South

route stretching from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea, under the EU multiannual financial framework (MFF). I was happy to learn that Via Carpathia was not only the joint vision of the development of the Carpathian region, since the construction of numerous road sections, e.g. motorway between Miskolc (Hungary) and Košice (Slovakia) was underway. I believe that funds for the Carpathians should be allocated in a coordinated way, so as to avoid dispersion of funds, in particular those from the EU budget, but to ensure their strategic allocation for joint Carpathian projects. The mechanism for financing joint activities focused on development of the Carpathians may be developed using the models of the existing macroregional EU strategies.

Then, cooperation should be established to further finance Via Carpathia from the EU budget under the MFF after 2020. The “Europe of the Carpathians” conferences are a forum for discussing the challenges faced by Europe, such as migration crisis and Brexit.

Rákóczi Castle, Sárospatak, Hungary



Apart from flagship projects, the importance of cross-border cooperation is confirmed by restoration of numerous border crossing points in the Carpathians, in particular between Slovakia and Hungary. Such projects contribute to development and to increasing the competitiveness of our regions, to establishing interpersonal contacts and fostering ties between our cities, towns and villages.

After years of intensive negotiations, I believe that as regards our cooperation conclusions should be cautiously drawn from the EU Strategy for the Danube Region adopted in 2011 during the Hungarian presidency of the Council of the EU. We are ready to share experience related to development and implementation of that strategy, the aim of which is only to create synergy and use the coordination between the existing political measures and initiatives in the Danube region. In the opinion of Hungary, the potential strategy for the Carpathians should receive full support of stakeholders, and any elements that would overlap with the Strategy for the Danube Region should be limited.

I agree that the “Europe of the Carpathians” conferences provided a sufficient political platform to the parliamentarians involved in specific cross-border projects and regional programmes and demonstrated unity, e.g. with respect to crisis in Ukraine.

Since between July 2017 and June 2018 Hungary will hold the rotational presidency of the Visegrad Group, I strongly believe that V4 is now a brand, a real alliance, within which we may hold honest discussions, with mutual respect and based on mutual trust and flexibility.

In my opinion, cooperation within the framework of the “Europe of the Carpathians” may be based on best practices from the Visegrad Group and on models of macroregional EU strategies, taking into account the objectives of MFF after 2020. The aim of our cooperation in future may be assistance and clear support for non-EU Carpathian countries on their road to Euro-Atlantic integration.

Challenges for Central European policy

The European Union is experiencing a heterogeneous and wide-spreading crisis which has given rise to decentralist tendencies which are dangerous for its stability and consist in calling into question the cohesion and unity of the Community.

We are experiencing two types of populism. The first of them can be called borderline populism. It is promoted by political parties and politicians outside the institutionalised scene. This type is based on emotion, strength of social discontent, and it challenges the very sense of a continued European integration. Borderline populism is condemned by mainstream European policy, the media and opinion leaders. Every election result that can be interpreted as a defeat of the borderline populism is praised as a great victory of the European idea and a strengthening of the European Union.

However, there is also another populism that rears its head in the European political debate, which might be called systemic populism or institutional populism. It is yet another of the many paradoxes of European integration, since populism should *ex definitione* oppose the system. However, the European Union is full of paradoxes and was based on them, to say the truth, from the very beginning (as an attempt to develop a non-state form of political community). Systemic populism is promoted by mainstream politicians who, to win elections against the forces of borderline populism, take over part of their election slogans and adapt themselves to changing social attitudes. In result, the elections recently conducted in a number of European states were preceded by an unparalleled eruption of radicalism on the part of centre parties whose programme in normal conditions advocates an open and liberal society. In some countries, systemic populism was directed against immigrants from Turkey, in other – against broadly understood market competition from Central Europe (including Poland). Finally, there are countries where systemic populism takes the form of the project of a multi- (or two-) speed Europe.



Panel "ABC. Europe of the Carpathians as the centre of the region located between the Adriatic, Baltic and Black Seas"; Loreta Grauziniene – the Speaker of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, Krzysztof Szczerski – the Secretary of State in the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland, Ryszard Terlecki – the Deputy Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Conference "Europe of the Carpathians", Krynica-Zdrój, 7 September 2016

While the successes of borderline populism are presented as failures of the integration and a threat to Europe, successes of systemic populism are interpreted to the contrary – as a victory. Meanwhile, systemic populism is equally, and sometimes even more, dangerous for the future of the European Union as it provides decentralist trends with an institutional foundation.

In addition, systemic populism is particularly unfavourable for Central Europe since apart from those its versions which focus on internal (anti-immigrant) relationships within a state, the other versions channel negative social emotions against our part of Europe, questioning the great achievement – putting an end to division of Europe by the Cold War and bringing about real European integration. I would certainly prefer not to hear one day an ominous statement from a European politician that the end of the Cold War was the biggest

geopolitical disaster of the 20th century, but it seems that there are people who think that way. Dividing Europe within the European Union into the West and the East is all the more harmful since the European integration has by no means been finalised yet – many European countries still find themselves outside the integrated area – after all, the eastern border of Poland is not, and neither is the southern border of Hungary or the eastern border of Croatia, the eastern border of Europe.

From the summary analysis presented above it results that in the current state of the Community policy, the initiatives to integrate and emancipate the Central European region, aimed at making it a necessary and strong element of stability of the whole European Union, having subjectivity and resources enabling to participate in decision-making processes, are of importance. Central Europe has to be “too big to ignore”. It has to defend itself against the tide of systemic populism emerging in the West.

Golubac Fortress on the Danube River, Serbia



Wawel, Cracow, Poland





When putting model thinking into practice of geopolitical reality, it is also necessary to ask about the actual potential for the creation and integration of the policy-making environment in Central Europe. Many observers are of the opinion that such international policy as pursued by President Lech Kaczyński is no longer possible as the conditions have changed. Of course, we are all aware it is much more difficult than before to integrate the region. Nevertheless, the concept of active regional policy remains valid. Its fundamental assumption, the Atlantic security guarantee for Central Europe – a guarantee which, given the conflict in eastern Ukraine, shall be particularly strengthened through the real NATO presence in the region – has not changed. This very first safety pillar in the form of the North Atlantic Treaty implies the creation of a second pillar – strengthening the region through its integration and building its subjectivity.

President Lech Kaczyński at the Energy Summit attended by the presidents of: Lithuania – Valdas Adamkus, Georgia – Mikheil Saakashvili, Ukraine – Viktor Yushchenko and Azerbaijan – Ilham Aliyev, first on the right: the Secretary of State at the Ministry of Economy Piotr Naimski, Krakow, 11–12 May 2007





Charles Bridge in Prague

In addition, for many years, from the death of President Lech Kaczyński to the political breakthrough in Poland in 2015, the country visibly lacked initiatives that would show the factors really uniting the Central European region. It was ritual that won, and ritual is the worst idea for a foreign policy, as it always degenerates into banality. Also in other configurations of relationships between states and in other fields of cooperation, there were not enough ideas or initiative.

The fate of the concept of the Strategy for the Carpathian Region, promoted at that time by the opposition party, Law and Justice, which did not raise interest of the Polish government, was a learning experience. This concept had, and still has, a macro-economic dimension to it, as it assumes taking into account in the financial perspective of the European Union, apart from the strategies for the Adriatic and Ionian, Danube, Alpine, and Baltic Sea regions, also the Carpathian strategy. The great bend of Carpathians is – also in geopolitical terms – an extremely interesting area which connects Member States of the European Union with non-EU



Eastern Carpathians in the autumn

countries. In this area, such countries as Austria, Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine, Hungary, Romania, and even Serbia can be included. A coordinated use of structural funds in a number of fields, e.g. ecology and water economy, agriculture and transport, would result in more efficient connections within this area, as well as a more rational consumption of its natural resources. The Carpathian strategy would show a practical dimension of cooperation in the region which could be then translated into its political force. Unfortunately, during the negotiation of the budget of the European Union for 2014–2020, the Polish government failed to display the appropriate initiative and undertake actions to include the Carpathian strategy into the financial perspective of the European Union. And these are the very ideas which are of key importance for the integration of the region and for preventing it from becoming void. Any proposals for the activation of the regional cooperation must include them in order to be real proposals.

Therefore, at the moment, on the initiative of President Andrzej Duda, in cooperation with Croatia, a concept of the Three Seas Initiative is being created. The concept is consistent with the same rationale that underlies the concept of the EU Strategy for the Carpathian Region and the initiative of the “Europe of the Carpathians”. The rationale is about overcoming practical cohesion deficits in the area of transport, telecommunications and energy infrastructure on the north-south axis between the three seas of Central Europe: the Baltic Sea, the Adriatic Sea, and the Black Sea. The more our region is integrated, the more integrated European Union will be and in this sense, the Three Seas initiative is a protective measure against disintegrating impulses generated by the centres of systemic populism.

When we ask why Central Europe is important for the European policy of Poland, there are three fundamental reasons that should be indicated. Firstly, it is the region in which the issue of subjectivity and sphere of influence of the Polish policy in the system of competitive balance which the European Union finds its proper context. However, if we assume a broad geopolitical background, this argument will be even more important, as we can perceive Central Europe then as a political space whose independence is necessary to maintain general balance in the part of the world where each domination imposed by one of the major players aspiring to hegemony ended in a global tragedy and an imaginable hecatomb. In this sense, only cooperation of free nations and independent countries of Central Europe can guarantee a peaceful and harmonious order in Europe. Secondly, Central Europe defining itself through its own subjectivity (with itself), and not through an external context (with others) can overcome the hierarchical vision of relationships between the politically established “centres” and “peripheries” determined thereby. Thirdly, an important element to characterise the importance of Central Europe for the Polish policy is the context of modernisation community. The countries of our region are by no means a sentimental or anachronistic community. Central Europe is neither a grandma’s knick-knack, nor it is reduced to ruminating about the occupation of this land by the Austro-Hungarian Empire, as it is sometimes depicted. I think that it is much more interesting and beneficial, also when we think of the needs of the contemporary international policy, to define our part of Europe through its achievements in modernisation, which were closely associated with its subjectivity and with the highlighting of its own identity. Countries and nations of Central Europe have many times undertaken excellent and highly

successful modernisation attempts which have made them fully-fledged actors in the international order. Central Europe is aspiring, not resigning.

It is worth to consider the three dimensions of the importance of Central Europe for Polish policy in the context of contemporary conditions and make an attempt to draw conclusions conducive to the future action programme so as to establish a basis for the strengthening of the political subjectivity of Central European countries – each of them alone and the region as a whole.

Central Europe as a regional system of close cooperation of strong national states capable of subjective action is in the interest of Poland. Creation of a “ge-

Tatra Mountains, the Za Mnichem Valley





Meeting with the President of the Republic of Poland Andrzej Duda, 2nd Summit of Speakers of Central and Eastern European Parliaments, Warsaw, 17–18 May 2017 (persons in the photograph – see p. 178)

opolitical void” in this part of the continent, as well as reducing us to the role of imitative development peripheries dependent on the impulses coming from the mainstream, is contrary to our interest. A void calls for filling.

A regional system of cooperation can be built if we comply with four conditions.

1. It is necessary to guarantee relative safety in the Central European region. This means that, in the present conditions of global policy, it is necessary not only to built independent defence capabilities (e.g. by Poland) but also to maintain Trans-Atlantic relationships with a concurrent significant military presence of NATO in the area, with guarantees of allied assistance in emergency situations, appropriately confirmed and operationally feasible.
2. Central European countries should be able to cooperate in other security areas, especially in the area of economic security (including energy) and environmental security, in order to create a system of mutual assistance

guarantees and cross guarantees covering emerging risks. A regional solidarity network in the area of security is of key importance.

3. A subjective regional community will not come into being without overcoming the obstacles to cooperation and the deficits of infrastructural cohesion mentioned above.

Countries involved in the Three Seas Project





Wawel Royal Castle, Krakow

4. It is necessary to realise our common interests and to work out their catalogue. Central Europe should not be a “political spell”; it should become a political reality. While it is easy to talk about the need for cooperation, without the community of interest the unity will not be real. We need a “community of daily life”, namely programmes of joint investments and an extensive network of contacts which will bring our countries and nations closer to each other. An important part of such actions should be overcoming infrastructural as well as educational and cultural barriers based on stereotypes.

The struggle for Central Europe is fascinating, as the whole region is. It might sometimes seem that being outside the main areas of interest of the global audience (such as e.g. Middle East), we can act in our region while remaining indifferent



Tatra Mountains - ski touring at Morskie Oko, Rysy in the background

to what does not concern us. One could not be more mistaken. The authorities of the Central European countries must realise their crucial geopolitical position, as evidenced by historical experience and interest in the region expressed by the main global players. Therefore, Central Europe can never afford passivity. It must always be an active community of aspirations.

Community of European values

The crisis of values, in particular democratic values, constitutes a problem of the modern world. Nowadays, conceptual principles, such as freedom of speech, human rights and others, although they constitute the essence of democratic systems, more and more often give way to financial and material interests and the enrichment of individual oligarchic group within the framework of one globalised world. In the context of this dilemma, one should stress the effectiveness of Eastern Partnership, the development of regional and cross-border cooperation in shaping democratic values in the countries to which this project is addressed. Ukraine is one of the leaders of this initiative. Many western politicians find the connection between ideological breakthrough in the Eastern Partnership region and Euromaidan natural and consider it an important achievement of Eastern European policy of the European Union. Francis Fukuyama called Euromaidan “a grand historical event and one of the most significant of our time. Its meaning transcends far beyond the scope of Ukraine. It’s a grand battle for the spread of modern forms of democratic rule”. This is why both Ukrainian authorities and international community need to fully understand their responsibility not only towards the Ukrainians and their security guarantees, but also towards the whole civilised world.

Nowadays, Ukraine is a very precious donor of democratic values for Europe. It was to defend these values that people came to Maidan and they still manifest their irresistible desire of building a democratic society, which is a characteristic feature of Ukrainians from a historical point of view.

Only common values can establish the basis for common interests – of political, economic, social, cultural nature, etc.

Euroregions are one of the most influential forms of defence of common interests. Nowadays they remain one of the tools most often used for cross-border cooperation. The first such project was the Carpathian Euroregion, established in 1993 in Debrecen (Hungary), which includes 19 territorial administrative units



Conference “Europe of the Carpathians”. From the right: Deputy of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Oksana Yurynets, Kazimierzowski Castle in Przemyśl, 27 February 2016 (persons in the photograph – see p. 179)

in Poland, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine. Due to the fact that this Euroregion consists of the following Ukrainian oblasts: the Zakarpattia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv and Chernivtsi Oblast, it is this region that is boosting to a great extent the development of western regions of Ukraine. Notably, the Carpathian Euroregion has some distinctive features as a tool of cross-border activity. Above all, it is the first organisation in such a format established in the former Soviet bloc. Regions that belong to the Carpathian Euroregion share a common history as well as cultural, geopolitical and economic bonds. At the same time, they differ from each other when it comes to their potential resources and economic development level; what is more, they constitute depression-stricken areas in their countries as regards social and economic indicators.

Because of geopolitical aspects, the essential aim of the functioning of the Carpathian Euroregion is to promote European integration of Ukraine, since at the national level the regional dimension of European integration is stimulated.

Without any doubt, such a form of cross-border cooperation has positive economic, social and humanitarian effects. Among the most successful projects carried out within the Carpathian Euroregion, we can indicate the foundation of the Carpathian Euroregion Universities Association, international tourist trail “Carpathian region” and so on. EU technical assistance, which offers a possibility to obtain subsidies in order to satisfy the needs of local development, is also important for the development of the Ukrainian part of the Carpathian Euroregion. For instance, thanks to this tool the Lviv Oblast State Administration was able to implement a number of programmes, especially: “Renewable sources of energy – recipe for improvement of natural environment quality in Lubaczów district and Yavoriv Raion” (EUR 145,000); “Lubaczów – Yavoriv: two potentials, shared

Chornohora – mountain range in western Ukraine



opportunity” (EUR 680,000); “Improvement of the effectiveness of the cross-border ecological threat response system: Tomaszów Lubelski – Zhovkva – Sokal” (EUR 344,000); “Development of the cross-border system of protection against natural threats on the Polish and Ukrainian border” (EUR 455,000). Nevertheless, when analysing the most important ways of development of the Carpathian Euroregion we should also stress that most of the implemented projects are aimed at supporting culture, education and tourism.

It needs to be pointed out that the European context has enforced conceptual changes in the establishment and implementation of territorial cooperation. Therefore, the ideological assumptions of the Carpathian Euroregion also need to be revised. Otherwise, “this institution may remain nothing but a forum for

Black Cheremosh River – river in the Eastern Carpathians, Ukraine





Saint Sophia Cathedral, Kiev

exchange of opinions by its members instead of being an active player in terms of European territorial cooperation”.

As for the geopolitical dimension, the establishment of an European macro-regional development strategy for the Carpathians is still a current issue, as an important factor of territorial coherence and tightening cooperation between not only the Carpathian countries and regions but also the European Union and its eastern partners.

It should be stressed that only joint efforts taken by nations, parliaments, governments and local authorities in Carpathian countries guarantee effective promotion of interests of the Carpathians on the European forum. In this context, the development of a network of parliamentary cooperation for the Carpathian countries is equally important, whereas the promotion of regular relations between the parliaments of the Carpathian countries in areas important for the development of the region remains a priority.

Europe needs joint efforts to protect and develop the Carpathians. Europe and preserve values. The example discussed by the Ukrainian political analyst Anna Korbat is notable and deserves some attention here. A few years ago, a collection of artistic installations was brought to Kiev. It included a glass cubic room full of white smoke looking like thick fog. Upon entering the room, one completely loses spatial orientation, does not know where the door is and how to get back to it despite being just a few steps away. After a couple of minutes inside this room, people who were not touching the wall started to panic even though they all knew that the cube was small and that they could reach the wall if they went in any direction, which would help them to exit the smoke area. The contemporary European area is very similar to such a room: we see nothing when taking a step or even a few steps in the smoke of Kremlin unpredictability. As a precaution, some of us have managed to touch the wall, while others failed to do so and are now paying the price for it. The exit from that glass installation led to a safe museum, whereas in the current reality it only leads to the world where such states as Russia or China dictate their values. Running near the wall, hoping that things will work out somehow, instead of joining efforts aimed at dispersing the smoke and dealing with those who sprinkle it will not bring many advantages.

Regional cooperation of Carpathian countries – the idea and its future

Harmonious development of countries and regions of the European Union, as well as their neighbouring countries, is one of the most important factors determining the future shape of Europe. The largest ever enlargement of the EU in 2004–2007 and the development of cooperation with neighbouring countries have created conditions for many initiatives which introduce new ways of thinking about social and economic development and create an opportunity to provide a strong boost to development, especially in its territorial dimension. The aforementioned initiatives include macro-regional strategies which constitute a platform allowing for cooperation across the administrative borders of countries and regions. Macro-regional strategies offer new opportunities for cooperation within the scope of similar challenges and development potentials which cannot be effectively addressed in one country or region, but are at the same time too specific to be addressed at the EU level. Macro-regional strategies unite the European society, not only in its economic and social dimensions, but also spatially, by establishing cooperation directly between various states and regions of Europe.

The process of European integration is both an opportunity and a challenge, especially in terms of building a European space of equal opportunities, security and prosperity. In order to achieve these goals, it is particularly important to identify specific characteristics of these countries and regions which differ from the European average in terms of their living standards and socio-economic development. The Carpathian Mountains are an example of such a region, despite their great significance in the past. It is a region with distinct culture shaped by, among other things, historical and environmental conditions – a former stage of historical migrations, and a place once inhabited by people of different nationalities and ethnicities which benefited from its diversity. However, nowadays the region is commonly seen as a barrier to development rather than one of its building blocks. The tragic history of this area constitutes an almost insurmountable obstacle; and common problems of socio-economic development divide, instead of unifying the countries and nations of the region. Therefore, our common chal-



Panel “The Carpathian strategy – a development concept for the Central and Eastern European macro-region”, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Development of the Republic of Poland Jerzy Kwieciński and Secretary of State at the Ministry of Regional Development and Administration of Romania Mihaela Vrabete, Conference “Europe of the Carpathians”, Krynica-Zdrój, 8 September 2016

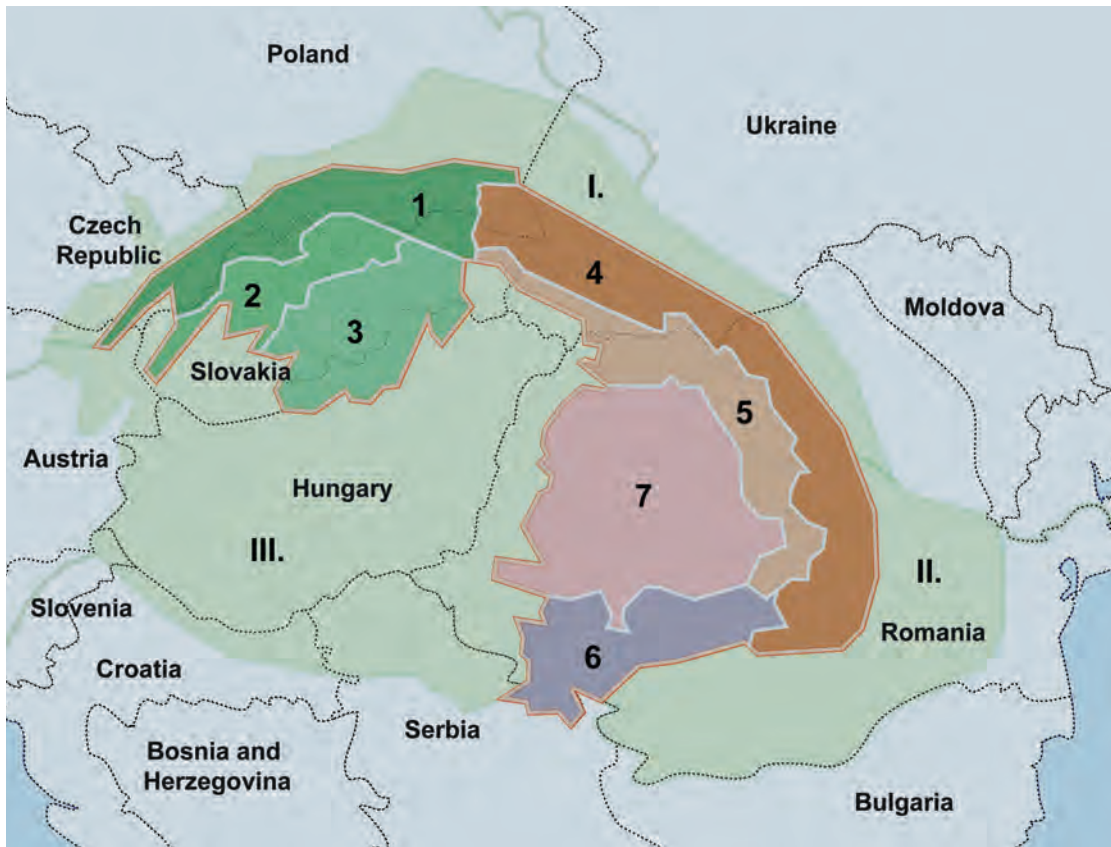
lenge is to make sure that the Carpathians become a unifying rather than dividing force once more, and that the Carpathian cooperation contributes to the spatial, political, social and economic integration of Europe.

At present, despite its strategic importance for the sustainable development of the whole EU and its neighbouring countries, the Carpathians, as a mountain and border region, still face many adverse socio-economic phenomena. This state of affairs results from a failure to take sufficient advantage of the enormous potential of the macro-region, which is conducive to the development of many economic activities, high quality agricultural systems and a strong tourism industry. With the use of the internal resources of the Carpathians, it is possible for the Carpathian countries to cooperate together in order to achieve a more dynamic

and balanced socio-economic development of the macro-region. Accelerating and intensifying changes in this area will positively affect not only the quality of life of the inhabitants of the Carpathians, but also that of the whole European community. In addition to actions taken by individual countries, initiated both by local and state governments, the best development outcomes could be achieved by creating a development plan for the entire macro-region, looking beyond the domestic perspective.

The EU macro-regional strategy dedicated to the Carpathians constitutes an impulse to take integrated actions across the administrative borders of individual countries with the aim of accelerating the growth of the Carpathian region, and

Mountain range of the Carpathians: 1. Outer Western Carpathians, 2. Central Western Carpathians, 3. Inner Western Carpathians, 4. Outer Eastern Carpathians, 5. Inner Eastern Carpathians, 6. Southern Carpathians, 7. Western Romanian Carpathians and Transylvanian Plateau, I. Subcarpathia, II. Southern Romanian Plains, III. Pannonian Basin





Visegrad Citadel, Hungary

at the same time preserving its unique environmental and cultural heritage. The main premise of the development strategy for the Carpathian macro-region is the need to turn this area, which is currently considered to be the periphery of Europe, into one of its centres. In order to achieve this objective, it is necessary to create mechanisms which will allow to exploit the potential of various regions within the Carpathians, and use it for acceleration of socio-economic development. It requires not only implementation of regional, state and transnational activities, but also making sure that such initiatives are skilfully coordinated and complement each other. Therefore, there is a need to create a coherent vision for the development of the Carpathians and a coordination mechanism at the transnational level. The macro-regional strategy is an excellent instrument for coordinating the efforts of all entities involved in the capacity building of the Carpathian region.

Taking into consideration the multi-dimensional benefits of the development of the Carpathians which can potentially result from such macro-regional cooperation, Poland has taken the initiative to develop the assumptions of the EU

Macro-regional Strategy for the Carpathian Region. This document became the basis for discussions between the countries which could be potentially involved in the Carpathian strategy, including the EU members, i.e. the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Romania and Poland, as well as their neighbouring countries: Ukraine, Serbia, and Moldova. The proposed main objective of the strategy is to strengthen the competitiveness and attractiveness of the Carpathian region and to improve the quality of life of its inhabitants, by using its internal development potential, while at the same time respecting the natural and cultural heritage of the Carpathians. The documents proposed three main areas of future cooperation of the Carpathian countries: "Competitive Carpathians", "Green Carpathians" and "Coherent Carpathian Mountains", as well as a horizontal area of "Institutional Cooperation". The first area of strategic activities is related to strengthening of economic cooperation and includes development of "clean" industries, sustainable development of tourism, and agricultural and food sector, development of

Parliamentary Meeting of States of Central and Eastern Europe "Solidarity and Sovereignty", Warsaw, 30–31 August 2016 (persons in the photograph – see p. 179)





Monument to Istvána Dobó, Eger, Hungary

a macro-regional innovation system by means of integrated interventions which use local resources and capacities, as well as including in the development effort areas with less favourable socio-economic conditions in order to increase the competitiveness of the region. However, without proper transport, digital and social infrastructure, actions related to other areas cannot be implemented. Therefore, the proposed joint actions within the second strategic area will focus on increasing the accessibility of the Carpathian Mountains by investing in development of the road network, railways, ICT infrastructure and providing a system of e-services to residents of the macro-region, which will not only make the region more open, but also strengthen its internal cohesion.

The environmental and cultural values of the Carpathian region are an indispensable element of its development. The proposed third strategic area focuses

on strengthening of macro-regional cooperation, the main objective of which will be the protection and preservation of the environment, as well as the implementation of educational activities that increase the ecological awareness of the inhabitants of the macro-region, together with promotion of ecological attitudes, which will contribute to the improvement of quality of the environment. Co-operation in the scope of preservation and protection of the cultural heritage of the Carpathian region, as well as shaping the Carpathian regional brand, will also make the region a more attractive and popular destination for tourists.

An important element for the comprehensive development of the Carpathians is the issue of spatial development and common functional connections within the region. The quality of operation of institutions, including local governments, is in many cases the decisive factor determining the quality of functional

Medieval Bran Castle in Transylvania, Romania



connections, and therefore also development perspectives of the macro-region. The horizontal area acts to provide support for the Carpathian rural-urban collaboration and joint coordination of spatial planning management. Additionally, it strengthens cross-border collaboration and border security.

Such targeted actions will provide an effective response to the development challenges resulting from the mountainous character of the macro-region. The strategy will support the development of mountain-focused entrepreneurship by making better use of the internal resources of the macro-region, especially in high mountain areas. It will allow for including Carpathian rural areas and small and medium-sized towns in the economic development process, and will improve the functional and spatial accessibility of the most peripheral, border and hard-to-reach areas located far away from the main development centres. The strategy will support the development of those sectors of the economy that have the

A folk band, Carpathians, Romania





Šargan Eight – a narrow-gauge heritage railway in Zlatibor region, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina

greatest potential and are common to most Carpathian countries. Due to the need for sustainable development of the macro-region, modern and environment-friendly technologies and production processes, sustainable tourism based on non-invasive human presence, sustainable agriculture and the development of Carpathian regional products have been identified as the sectors with the best prospects. Macro-regional cooperation in the Carpathians will enable the Carpathian countries to respond more effectively to the challenges related to natural processes, such as the climate change and its impact on the economy of mountain areas, deforestation and air pollution. The unique added value of the Carpathian Strategy will be the process of macro-regional cooperation itself – offering opportunities for its participants to gain new competences, as well as opportunities related to development of human and social capital, networking and creation of

relationships and cooperation networks, experience-based learning, and exchanges of knowledge, experience and know-how related to development policy issues. The Carpathian strategy will become an important tool to support cooperation with non-EU countries within the scope of the European Neighbourhood Policy, enabling them to implement best practices and European standards.

Implementation of the macro-regional strategy for the Carpathian region will be carried out with the objectives of social, economic, territorial and environmental cohesion in mind, supplementing actions undertaken at national and regional level, in particular, by addressing the challenges and needs common to most or all regions of the Carpathians. It will support and strengthen existing forms of cooperation, such as the Carpathian Convention or Euroregions. Long-term stable cooperation of the Carpathian countries, carried out in accordance with the macro-regional strategy, will make it possible to overcome the existing barriers to the development of the Carpathian region, to strengthen its existing capacities and to reach its full potential.

The concept of “Europe of the Carpathians” in Ukrainian foreign policy on the example of an academic cooperation project (“Carpathian University”)

The series of the “Europe of the Carpathians” conferences, which began in 2010 in Krynica-Zdrój and were held also in Krasieczyn and Przemyśl, comprising discussions on fundamental rules and principles of the geopolitical concept of intensive inter-regional cooperation of countries from the Carpathian region, as proposed by the Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland Marek Kuchciński, coincided with intensification of Ukraine’s efforts to prepare and sign the Association Agreement with the European Union. In this context, the Ukrainian diplomacy perceived the need to create a stable cooperation platform for all countries from the Carpathian region as an additional and efficient tool to develop political and economic ties of Ukraine with the European Union.

Regular contacts of representatives of national parliament, central government authorities, local governments and non-governmental organisations, academic circles and experts from Poland, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Ukraine, Romania and Serbia, provided an opportunity to strengthen the role of national parliaments of the Carpathian region countries in terms of defining the major objectives of Eastern policy of the European Parliament and the European Commission. It involves first of all the promotion of a strategic initiative to develop and adopt of a separate EU operational programme for the Carpathian region by the European Commission for medium and long-term, modelled on the Danube strategy, which would provide a strong incentive for constant and dynamic development of this part of Europe.

Among various tools and mechanism of the much needed operational programme, the issue of a common intellectual space in the Carpathian region is of particular interest. In our opinion, this space could be based on close cooperation



One of the panels of the “Europe of the Carpathians” conference. Right to left: Head of the Department of Roman Law at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków Rev. Prof. Franciszek Longchamps de Bériér, Head of the Department of International Relations and Diplomatic Service at the University of Lviv Markiyan Malskyy, Chairman of the Croatian Cultural Association “Napredak” Rev. Prof. Franjo Topić

between universities from the Carpathian region in the already existing forms, i.e. Association of Carpathian Region Universities (ACRU), S4C – Science for the Carpathians, Forum Carpaticum, Carpathian Open University, as well as the cooperation within the “Carpathian University” network proposed by the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv. Such cooperation is one of efficient forms of education diplomacy which, by searching for and implementing new ways of cooperation between universities and with various regional and local social groups, supports and strengthens the key role of contemporary universities that they should perform with respect to democratic, peaceful and constant development of this region of Central and Eastern Europe.

The “Carpathian University” programme should build on the network of universities and other higher education institutions from the Carpathian region, in particular universities from Poland, Ukraine, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, Hungary and Serbia. The universities develop special university courses and implement them in their curricula, conduct joint research programmes in close coordination and cooperation with local authorities and communities. The essence of the “Carpathian University” programme is to plan, develop and coordinate thematic bachelor and master degree studies, using modern educational IT technologies, distant teaching methods and virtual communication between students, lecturers and researchers.

2nd Local Development Forum, one of the sessions of the “Europe of the Carpathians”. Right to left: Secretary of State in the Polish Ministry of Development Jerzy Kwieciński, Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Andriy Parubiy, Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland Marek Kuchciński, Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze, Truskavets, 23 June 2017





Lviv Opera, Ukraine

The institutional units of the network of universities, local authorities and non-governmental organisations could be:

- a. the Council of the Carpathian University consisting of the representatives of rectors, partner universities, students and non-governmental organisations;
- b. the secretariat to support and coordinate regional cooperation and contacts between universities, manage financial activities and publish teaching materials;
- c. national centres responsible for communication, information, national conferences and promotion of materials.

An important element of the project is cooperation of universities at the initial stage of developing the educational part of the programme which comprises the curriculum, recommendations for lecturers, teaching materials, websites and e-learning elements. The programme will contribute to internationalisation of social life of the region by developing communication technologies, such as student audio and video conferences, remote lectures and online meetings, in education. Each university may use all materials of the programme, engaging own lecturers and resources to implement the programme.

We suggest five basic educational fields:

- History of the Carpathian region;
- Democracy in the Carpathian region;
- Social and economic processes in the Carpathian region;
- Culture and multicultural societies in the Carpathian region;
- Continuous development of the Carpathian region.

The first organisational steps have already been taken, namely:

- The initiative group of academics from the Lviv University and the University of Rzeszów was established to analyse the functioning of similar educational projects in other regions of Europe.
- The proposal was made to include the integral course “Continuous development of the Carpathian region” in the relevant curricula of partner universities.
- Invitations to participate in the “Carpathian University” programme were sent.

This activity allows to start work on creating the organisational structures of the programme, prepare the meeting of rectors of partner universities in order to coordinate joint efforts to implement the project, prepare and publish three publications: *Encyclopaedia of the Carpathians*, *Atlas of the Carpathians*, *The Carpathian Region: Culture, Politics, Society*, as well as to include the “Carpathian University” programme in the action plan of the international and inter-regional initiative “Europe of the Carpathians”.

The “Europe of the Carpathians” concept is a multidimensional initiative with a huge potential for activation of inter-regional and international cooperation. It is an excellent match with other modern geopolitical concepts, in particular the Intermarium concept, and to implement aspirations and objectives of European integration.

In the context of practical implementation of the prospective – in terms of modern European geopolitics – Three Seas concept and including Ukraine in this project, it seems important to establish an international English-language second-cycle programme of ‘Baltic–Black Sea Regional Studies’ at Ivan Franko National University of Lviv. The programme aims to educate experts on inter-regional co-operation and to enable students to gain fundamental knowledge of the history, economy, democratisation institutions and social development of the Baltic–Black Sea region. The EU-funded programme is conducted in partnership with universities from the European Union and Ukraine: Tartu (Estonia), Lund (Sweden), Poznan (Poland), Vilnius (Lithuania), Lviv, Kiev, Odessa, Mariupol (Ukraine). Along with other important projects such as the idea of double degrees, joint scientific research, regular conferences, re-establishment of the famous schools of international law and diplomacy, this initiative creates an intellectual space of the modern Europe of the Carpathians.

Parliamentary diplomacy in the “Europe of the Carpathians” region

Parliamentary diplomacy or, as it is sometimes called, the parliamentary form of international communication, is an important, although certainly not essential, element of achieving the assumed objectives of the state foreign policy. It has the form of soft power, since it does not use all conventional tools of proper or traditional diplomacy. Due to its predominantly soft tools of implementation, it becomes a very specific, increasingly important and efficient way of international communication. Diplomacy plays a role of no small importance in the new arrangement of the system position of the parliament which, due to a number of different circumstances, has recently been significantly weakened and thus needs a new positioning. One of the tools for such positioning and for finding new roles and new areas of parliamentary activity is diplomacy conducted by legislatures. Parliamentary diplomacy should be seen as a result of numerous diverse changes taking place in the international environment (globalisation, integration, increased importance of non-state international law entities) and inside the state (political system) that define the new role of parliament in political (state, international, suprapstate) sphere.

The growing importance of parliaments in the vast area of external relations of the state has been observed for some time. The importance goes far beyond the traditional forms attributed to parliament in this area and related to legislation (participation in ratification of at least some international treaties), political control over the government (supervision of foreign policy) and security (introduction of the state of war and states of emergency). The three above areas constitute a traditional, rather narrow area of the parliament’s participation in the state foreign policy. The participation has so far been primarily indirect, via legislation or activity of the government subject to verification by the parliament. In practice, it often boils down to involvement of the parliament, in various forms, in the mechanisms of follow-up approval of international law that is to become binding for a given state. This special activity of the parliament had often been defined as its separate, other than classic, function which is the approval of international law



Church at Lutowiska, in the background: Otryt – a mountain range in Bieszczady

and which as a rule is contained within the legislative function, since the parliament's consent for ratification of an international treaty is expressed in a statutory act and thus according to the procedure appropriate for enacting a legal act. Other forms of potential involvement of parliaments in international affairs were even more indirect and were related to general control over the government's policy, which obviously also covered its international activity. However, it must be noted that the instruments were not targeted at foreign policy only, but were general instruments defining the mechanisms of cooperation between the government and the parliament.

In the European Union, a new trend is emerging, i.e. international activity of parliaments, going far beyond approval of international law or general control over the government, which may "affect" international affairs, becomes multifaceted, multidimensional and multiform. Nevertheless, the most important thing is that in some areas the activity is already directly related to performance of some international (EU) tasks (functions). It is suggested that we should speak about

the external function of the parliament or about the parliament’s involvement in external affairs, which is related to the formation of the European function as an independent function of the parliament that is different than its all other functions.

The critics of diplomacy conducted by legislature point out that, as the body representing the nation, the parliament is only an entity of internal representation, not external representation which is reserved for the executive. Thus the opponents of parliamentary diplomacy argue that external activity of the parliament should be reduced to the minimum and always understood narrowly, since otherwise it would undermine Montesquieu’s separation of powers system where external relations are the domain of the executive. This argument should be unequivocally rejected for at least several reasons. Firstly, because, when formulating his version of the separation of the state activities and then assignment of specific entities to those activities, Montesquieu did not focus on external relations, which in contracts were strongly highlighted in the John Locke’s version of the separation of powers where the federative power was separated as a separate power. Secondly, because today the area of this federative power, i.e. inclusion of the state into the international environment and relations with other international law entities (i.e. states and organisations) is considerably larger than in the 17th and 18th century where theoretical concepts of the separation of powers were formulated (by different authors). While in the 17th and 18th century the representation of the state could be ignored, today, with increasing international interdependencies, it is virtually impossible. Thirdly, because applying Montesquieu’s separation of powers concept to the reality of the 21st century is a complete anachronism and failure to notice that the triple division of powers is a solution that is not working in modern states which have a number of other bodies which cannot be classified as legislative, executive or judicial authorities.

An increasing activity of legislature at the international forum, and in particular the emergence of parliamentary diplomacy, is a natural course of events, originating from at least several different phenomena and processes, including in particular:

- redefinition of classic concepts of separation of powers and recognising that the simple triple division is an anachronism;
- significant intensification of both bilateral and multilateral international relations;

- erosion of conventionally understood function of parliament and search for the areas of activity which will reposition its overall system status.

It is worth paying attention to the latter process, since it stood behind the increased involvement of parliaments in conducting (co-conducting) the foreign policy. The position of the parliament as the classical executive body is slowly, though gradually, ebbing away. This is due to:

- an increasingly strong position of the executive;
- development of constitutional judgment authorities that weaken the system position of the legislature;
- practicing of various forms of direct democracy on an increasing scale;
- integration and globalisations influencing the basic legislative function of the parliament, transforming it into the function of international law approval;

Polish part of the Tatra Mountains





The building of the Hungarian National Assembly in Budapest

- progressing “agencisation” of policy, consisting in establishment of a growing number of independent agencies which, being independent, professional and impartial, are immune to parliamentary control;
- replacement of the traditional axis of political rivalry between the executive and the legislature with the rivalry between the governing party (coalition) and opposition, resulting in marginalisation of typical functions of the parliament;
- a significant change of the forms of citizen participation, i.e. departure from its traditional forms (election, referenda) to other forms considered to be protest democracy or counter-democracy.

There are objective international factors that should promote strengthening of parliamentary dimension of both the Polish diplomacy and diplomacy of other countries forming regional groups. The latter are becoming increasingly important, since the power and potential of individual states is weakening in the era of fast modernisation and globalisation processes, and the rank, prestige and inter-

The building of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, Praha





national position of a country today is increasingly the result of its regional bilateral and multilateral relations. This also concerns the “Europe of the Carpathians” region which corresponds to the geopolitical concept of Central and Eastern Europe (Trimarium, Europe between Adriatic, Baltic and Black seas). There are five major factors contributing to this process.

1. Uncertainty concerning the development of the EU in the near future, related to Brexit which may act as an even stronger incentive to formulate the concept of multi-speed Europe, with increasingly closer cooperation of “old” Member States and marginalisation of other countries.
2. The need to amortise the political role of some European Union Member States (Germany), the significance of which is already above the average and will increase further after Brexit and may transform the Union into an asymmetrical structure.
3. New dimension of post-Cold War confrontation between Russia and the West which in future will be one of major determinants of the policy of the entire Europe, in particular the Trimarium Europe.
4. Existence of areas not covered by international treaties and alliances, which are particularly prone to impacts of post-Cold War policy, and serve as a natural encouragement for building the influence and then closer links with Russia (Caucasus, the Balkans, Moldova).
5. Progressing globalisation which depreciates autonomy and non-involvement, since in future only large structures will be major players in the global policy (United States, Russia, China, India and European Union).

The above factors lead to the conclusion that parliamentary diplomacy is certainly a form of parliamentary activity which in predictable time horizon will gain importance. It is particularly true for the European Union, where calls for “parliamentisation” have been voiced for a long time. “Parliamentisation” should be understood as an increase in important and system position of the European Parliament and empowerment of the parliaments of Member States. “Parliamentisation” of the Union is to prevent the deficit of democratic legitimacy of the Union which is now seen as a structure that is excessively bureaucratic, non-transparent, devoid of efficient liability and accountability mechanisms and going towards federalisation that is seen as a threat for in-



The House of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia

tegrity and identity of Member States and their constitutional authorities, including parliaments.

This gives rise to calls for strengthening the European Parliament which has been empowered, but insufficiently, by recent amendments to the EU primary legislation. There is a growing need to intensify the parliamentary diplomacy conducted by Member States' parliaments that for a long time have been complaining about their marginalised role in contacts with the EU authorities, since only national governments represent and express the interest of Member States at the EU forum. The advocates of a stronger and more serious role of national parliaments points out that it is the parliaments, as national representations, that are especially predisposed to take actions in the European Union, in particular to determine directions of the future development of European integration. The parliaments may give democratic form to discussion about the evolution of the Union. Today the discussion is conducted mainly by the elites, and not the societies. This is why the EU is perceived as an amorphous, non-democratic, technocratic and bureau-



Slovak part of the Tatra Mountains

cratic structure. With the debate on the future of the Union getting increasingly intense, the advocates of “parliamentisation” of the EU argue that involvement of national parliaments can serve as an efficient barrier to promoted federalist concepts, often perceived as an attack on sovereignty of nation states and their internal authorities, including parliaments. A more visible participation of national parliaments in the EU decision-making, demonstrated by i.a. more intensive parliamentary diplomacy, is to be a “new start” for the Union where nation states are respected (Europe of homelands or Europe of states) and at the same time decision-making processes are more democratic and appropriately legitimised.

It seems that the activity of Polish parliamentary diplomacy in this area should constantly be high. It may adopt at least several forms. Recently, a significant revival of cooperation within the Visegrad Group has been observed, also in parliamentary terms. Bilateral parliamentary fora remain unappreciated, al-

though they could become the form of permanent, and not only episodic and incidental, international cooperation. Such fora should be divided into the following groups:

1. frequent and regular fora, covering the countries seen as key partners of the Polish foreign policy;
2. less regular fora with other countries. Such division should naturally be preceded by a strategic decision on the choice of strategic partners within the “Europe of the Carpathians”. For obvious reasons, apart from neighbouring countries (Ukraine, Czech Republic), the partners should include Hungary and Romania with which cooperation should be intensified.

In foreign policy, using the parliamentary diplomacy, the construction of international arrangements should be governed by two principles: multidimensionality (multi-vectoriality) and counterbalancing. Only those principles allow to guarantee the basic objective of each foreign policy, i.e. security of the state and its ability at the international arena. This is particularly true for multilateral arrangements which depend on all participants and their particular policies. Therefore, apart from arrangements targeted at the “Europe of the Carpathians” region, Polish parliamentary diplomacy should in parallel develop other areas of cooperation, namely, the Baltic states and the entire Baltic Sea region, Caucasus and Turkey.

Apart from strengthening of cooperation, including parliamentary cooperation, within the Visegrad Group, the cooperation in the Baltic Sea region should also be reinforced, since it is in the best interest of Poland, in particular in terms of energy issues (Baltic Pipe). Poland should aim at strengthening and institutionalisation of cooperation in the Central and Eastern Europe for at least five reasons.

1. This region is essential to guarantee stability for strategic interests of Poland.
2. Strengthening of cooperation in the region may serve as a form of amortising the international position of Russia.
3. Strong and coordinated cooperation of Central and Eastern Europe will act as a counterbalance for cooperating Western Europe countries, which is necessary in the EU where 16 out of 28 states are Central and Eastern Europe countries.

4. The region is a pluralist area encompassing both countries belonging to the EU and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and countries remaining outside those structures, which creates a forum for dialogue between those two groups of countries.
5. The subjectivity of each country, in particular in this part of Europe, is very strongly linked to the position of the entire region, which is why the loss of significance of the region had always resulted in depreciation of all Central and Eastern Europe countries.

Intensification of parliamentary cooperation, including parliamentary diplomacy, of the countries from the region should encompass all textbook forms of parliamentary diplomacy (temporary diplomatic missions, international conferences, multilateral contacts in various forms). A new ambitious solution is institutionalisation of cooperation between the parliaments of the countries from the region by means of establishing an international organisation, such as the Eastern Europe Assembly, which would associate parliamentarians from the countries belonging to e.g. Central European Initiative. Such format would be an intermediate solution between the global Inter-Parliamentary Union and the regional Council of Europe. Another, less exposed and easier to implement form would be a permanent form of cooperation of political advisors to chairpersons of parliamentary chambers or their designated persons, from the entire region (called the Political Conference of Parliaments of the Central and Eastern Europe). Its tasks would include regular meetings to discuss the areas of cooperation and joint international activities. Specific political solutions for parliamentary chambers would be suggested.

Yet another form of cooperation in the region could consist in bilateral and multilateral contacts of parliamentary working bodies, in particular committees, and other organisational structures (e.g. parliamentary teams). A form which is worth considering is the establishment of an international research, strategic and political institution, similar to a think tank and called the Central European Institute of Parliamentary Research (affiliated at the Sejm of the Republic of Poland) which would perform multi-aspect parliamentary research (historical, sociological, legal research and political science) covering the entire Central and Eastern Europe. Such Institute would have three main statutory goals:

- research on parliamentary system in the region;
- intensification of international (research, political and parliamentary) cooperation in the region (conferences, bilateral and multilateral meetings, grants and internships) combined with lobbying for the region;
- determination of directions of development of the region, formulation of political strategies and political advisory services for constitutional authorities of those countries and international organisations.

Regardless of the forms of parliamentary diplomacy in Central and Eastern Europe, the existing forms of cooperation, which contribute to parliamentary diplomacy, should be strengthened and the new ones developed. The time when

“The Merry Cemetery”, Săpâanta, Romania



foreign policy of the state was an exclusive domain of national governments has come to an end a long time ago. The policy is conducted, although in various aspects and dimensions, by various entities, including non-state ones, such as various corporations and enterprises which, in particular in the area of economy, have often become an important player in international politics (so-called economic diplomacy). Foreign policy has become clearly multicentric, with one of its most important participants being parliaments which are seen not only as representation of the nation, but also as centres where internal and external policy objectives are formulated and implemented.

Collegium Carpathicum

The Carpathians are a region where many nations and countries of Central and Central-Eastern Europe have lived next to each other for centuries. It is a region where cultures of the Eastern, Western, Northern and Southern Europe interact, merge and cooperate. Although, in geographical terms, a mountain range can be seen as a barrier, in reality the Carpathians are a shared heritage and an area of cooperation in many fields, as well as the birthplace of a common tradition stemming from the centuries of often difficult and tumultuous history.

Currently, the Carpathian region includes six countries – the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, as well as Romania and Ukraine. These countries have cooperated for many years in many fields – economy, culture, foreign policy – especially as part of the Visegrad Group (V4), which was established nearly 30 years ago. Even though science and education constitute a highly significant field of cooperation, it needs to be further developed. Besides cooperation on the state level, direct cooperation between universities in the region is also extremely important.

The Carpathian community has inspired the development of a completely new project aimed at mobilising universities and facilitating the exchange of ideas and experiences. Its direct initiator was the Centre for East European Studies at the University of Warsaw – which I am honoured to head. It has been named “Collegium Carpathicum”, which serves to further underline the regional community of the participating countries. The project was officially presented at the Economic Forum in Krynica-Zdrój on 7 September 2017, during a discussion panel “Scientific cooperation between Carpathian states” as part of the “Europe of the Carpathians” conference, which has been organised in Krynica-Zdrój by the Sejm of the Republic of Poland for years. The conference saw a lot of talks between the heads of the Sejm, the heads of Parliaments of the Visegrad countries and researchers on the need to expand scientific cooperation.

“Collegium Carpathicum” is a special agreement between four universities from four countries of the Visegrad Group: the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary; and two universities of the Eastern neighbours of the V4: Romania and Ukraine. The basis of the project is interdisciplinary education, exchange of knowledge and experiences and development of the scientific potential among members of the young generation. The exchange of lecturers who will visit all of the universities participating in the Collegium will be crucial for achieving this goal. Currently, the region has no such international university consortium capable of spreading the knowledge about the Carpathian region.

The objective of the project is to raise the level of knowledge and awareness about the Carpathian region among the participants in the programme (students, lecturers, representatives of social organisations), and to strengthen the direct cooperation between the participating universities.

Currently, the “Collegium Carpathicum” includes six universities from V4 countries and neighbouring countries and the Programme Coordinator:

- Czech Republic – University of Ostrava;
- Poland – East European State Higher School in Przemyśl;
- Slovakia – University of Prešov;
- Hungary – Pázmány Péter Catholic University in Budapest;
- Romania – Ștefan cel Mare University of Suceava;
- Ukraine – Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University in Ivano-Frankivsk;

and Centre for East European Studies, University of Warsaw (consortium coordinator, participant in the exchange).

The Collegium began its activity in the autumn of 2017, starting from the winter semester of the 2017/2018 academic year. Letters of intent concerning the creation of “Collegium Carpathicum” and its operating principles were signed with each of the universities. In September 2018, the project received a positive opinion of the International Visegrad Fund and was awarded two grants for the period of 2018–2020 for the implementation of the “academic mobility and exchange” project, which can be potentially extended. Furthermore, “Collegium Carpathicum” is supported by the Sejm of the Republic of Poland. Since the grant was awarded, the Collegium successfully organised nearly 30 lectures as part of the

exchange programme between all seven parties to the agreement. In accordance with the rules of the consortium, meetings of the rectors and coordinators of the Collegium take place regularly in order to discuss the status of the project, its current activity and the prospects for cooperation. Such meetings took place in Krynica, Krasieczyn and Warsaw.

At this stage, the activity of “Collegium Carpathicum” consists in organising exchanges of guest lectures on broadly understood Carpathian issues, such as mountain botany, biology, ethnography and ethnology, geography, geology, Carpathian economy, history, linguistics, climatology, meteorology, conservation of nature and national parks, as well as seismology, at every university of the consortium and at the Centre for East European Studies. Researchers from such broad specialisations visit universities participating in the project presenting the most important discoveries, ideas or the latest research results. All of these diverse scientific fields are united by the common topic of the Carpathians understood as a geographic, historical and social region. The exchange of thoughts, ideas and experiences goes beyond the national borders and allows the universities to share the knowledge about the Carpathian region more effectively. It should be pointed out that the itinerant system of “Carpathian lectures” is a novel concept which provides the most efficient means of presenting the “Collegium Carpathicum” project at a dozen or so universities in six countries and which will demonstrate that the universities in the region share a common interest in the Carpathian issues.

The Collegium operates in the following way:

- each year, every Collegium university sends two or more lecturers from different fields for a visit lasting at least three days to give guest lectures at a Collegium university in a different country;
- the lecturer is a guest of a particular faculty depending on the subject matter of the lecture, but the lecture itself should be open to the entire university and even to students and listeners from other universities;
- at this stage of the project, the lectures are given in English.

Since the beginning of the “Collegium Carpathicum” project, the idea was not to stop at the current six universities but to expand the consortium by including other universities from the region as well. We plan to invite six more universities to work with us – one from each Visegrad Group country, one from Romania

and one from Ukraine. The official expansion of the project to include the new universities is planned to take place at the end of the second IVF grant in the summer of 2020. Naturally, we have already contacted the invited universities. The first meeting of the “old and new” CC rectors is planned for the “Europe of the Carpathians” conference in September 2019.

As previously mentioned, at the current stage the activities of the Collegium consist in mutual lecturer exchange. In the future, we plan to expand the Collegium’s activity to include organising conferences, debates and producing publications. During the talks held at the “Europe of the Carpathians” conference and during the meetings of CC rectors, a plan – extremely important and prestigious, though difficult to implement – to jointly develop and publish a *Carpathian Encyclopaedia* was discussed. However, its implementation requires establishing a dedicated research and editorial team, as well as obtaining a separate grant. The CC universities decided to make such efforts.

The symbolic seat of the Collegium will be situated at the pre-war Astronomical and Meteorological Observatory of the University of Warsaw, which is currently under renovation, located on the Pip Ivan peak in Chornohora (currently Ukraine, Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast). The site is currently being reconstructed by the Centre for East European Studies at the University of Warsaw and the Precarpathian University in Ivano-Frankivsk (both institutions participate in the “Collegium Carpathicum” project).



The Carpathians – the heart and soul of Europe’s sustainable development

The essence of sustainable development

In the second half of the 20th century, there was a growing awareness of the fact that many problems related to our planet and its inhabitants were connected with economic development of the world. Wild species are endangered with extinction, desertification is intensifying, water quality and accessibility is worsening and in many regions of the world, food is scarce. These problems are escalating all because of humans and their economic activity. Unreasonable water management, deforestation, agricultural soil degradation – these are obvious causes of desertification, that is, deterioration of water resources, decline in food production, resulting in migrations in search for food and water. Growing use of hard coal, lignite, gas and oil causes an increase in air pollution, that is becoming an alarming problem of large urban agglomerations. Combustion of traditional energy carriers, as well as deforestation and soil degradation, are all causes of an increased concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Each tonne of coal, accumulated both in geological storage (hard coal, lignite, oil, gas) and in forests and soils (organic carbon compounds), after combustion or mineralisation, results in emissions of 3.8 tonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. It should be noted that the natural forests of Central Europe store approximately 350 tonnes of organic carbon per hectare, a half of it in living and dead organic matter in the stands, and the other half in living and dead organic matter in the soil. A well-used agricultural soil stores at minimum 150 tonnes of organic carbon in the form of living and dead organic matter that ensures efficient production of good food. Every destruction of such systems, that is, deforestation or soil degradation, causes carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere, resulting in a decline in biomass production, disappearance of species typical for high content of organic carbon, a continuous decrease of water resources and worsening of water



A dam in the southern part of the Vidraru Lake, by the road leading to the Transfagarasan Pass, Romanian Carpathians

quality, and desertification (Szyszko 2007, 2016). If the worst comes to the worst, this leads to famine and migration in the search for water and food, which we can already observe in North Africa.

Measures for sustainable development

The Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 was a substantive global response to these threats, creating legal basis for implementation of the idea of sustainable development, that is, an economic development related to reasonable use of natural resources for the sake of humans and environment (Szyszko 2004). All men are subjects of sustainable development, not only authorised but also required to

use natural resources. However, they must use it in a way that would serve people and stimulate economic growth. One way to achieve this is to “subdue the Earth”, i.e., a concept of sustainable development understood as economic growth with a reasonable use of natural resources and respect for human rights. The concept was formulated based on forest sciences in the 17th century (Bendix 2014, Lusawa 2009, Szyszko, publication pending), which said that forests can be managed so that they can be used and at the same time kept sustainable. Its legal forms were created after the Earth Summit, with the adoption of three conventions: Convention on Biological Diversity (1992), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992) and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (1994). Entry into force of these conventions was aimed at alleviating hunger and improving the environmental status. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change proved to be of essence, as it aimed at halting the increase in temperature around the globe by stabilising the carbon dioxide concentration in the atmosphere on a level that does not result in adverse climate changes. In accordance with the Convention, this objective was to be achieved by two measures: reduction of carbon dioxide emission from combustion of traditional energy sources, such as hard coal, lignite, oil and gas, and appropriate land-use (LULUCF), including not only stopping deforestation and soil degradation, but also restoration of forests and soil remediation. The developed countries were obliged to reduce carbon dioxide emission into the atmosphere and increase its removal to a level that would – despite the expected economic growth of the developing countries and the increase of gas emissions in these countries permitted by the Convention – result in a stabilised concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere in 2008–2012. The reduction objectives of different highly-developed countries, which varied across these countries, were set in the Kyoto Protocol of 1997.

Efficiency of the measures for sustainable development up to 2015

Climate policy, despite the implementation of the Climate Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, did not meet the set objectives. In spite of the expenses incurred, counted in hundreds of billions of dollars, we did not manage to stabilise the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere on a level that, according to

the assumptions, was not to affect the climate system of the world. There were two reasons for this failure. Firstly, the majority of developed countries (with the exception of post-communist states, such as Poland) failed to fulfil their reduction obligations. Secondly, even if these countries had fulfilled their obligations to the fullest, the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere would still not have been stabilised. The increase in emissions from combustion and forest and soil degradation in developing countries has greatly exceeded the envisaged reduction obligations. The global climate policy pursued has failed tremendously (Szyszko, publication pending). The concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is still increasing, correlated with the temperature increase; there is still progressing desertification, forest ratio is decreasing, the level of agricultural soil degradation is rising, water resources are declining, and wild species are disappearing. Famine and migration are intensifying. Unemployment is increasing, as there are fewer jobs in greenfield areas. The failure to meet the objectives of climate policy has led to increasing costs, fueled by expanding bureaucracy and technocracy. Pope Francis pointed to these problems in his encyclical *Laudato Si'* (2015), postulating the need to make a new, fair agreement between all countries of the world, engaging them in effective actions with due respect for ethics and the laws of God (Müller 2016), but also the need for good education (Chrostowski 2015) and respect for the truth, and thus, science (Zichichi 2015). Such agreement was the one adopted at the Climate Conference in Paris in December 2015. It stated that we should begin decreasing the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere as soon as possible, with the lowest cost and highest efficiency possible. These actions should include the reduction of gas emission into the atmosphere and its removal equally. The agreement concerns all countries of the world. They are to fulfil their tasks voluntarily, considering their economic specificities, with the reduction of carbon dioxide emission into the atmosphere and its removal from the atmosphere by degraded soils and forests taken as equivalent activities, aiming to reach the objectives of the agreement. The Paris Agreement is reasonable. While the reduction of carbon dioxide emission and its impact on climate change may raise doubts from a scientific point of view (Zichichi 2015), there can be no doubts as to the fact that the emission reduction based on increased energy efficiency and development of innovation is justified at least when it comes to cutting emissions of toxic gas and dust. We cannot expect an improvement in air or water quality, revival of native biodiversity, increased food

production, without removal of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere in order to restore forests and remediate agricultural and forest soil. Therefore, the key to sustainable development is organic carbon and its management, and the Climate Convention and the Paris Agreement may become the legal foundation for global actions. One of the very important requirements of the Paris Agreement is to focus attention on the necessity to engage all countries of the world in climate policy on a voluntary basis, considering the economic specificities of different states. Poor countries, with large soil and forest areas, have different possibilities than wealthy countries with well-developed industry. However, the aim remains the same, and the common ground should be to reduce the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, which, according to the Agreement, may be achieved also based on local agreements between neighbouring states. The Carpathians are such a neighbourhood.

Specificity of the Europe of the Carpathians and future actions

The Carpathian region is inhabited by people of different nations, different languages, different religions. However, one thing they have in common is the specificity of natural resources in the Carpathians. The extensive smallholder farming, herding and forestry have brought many common features to this diverse population. Their social mentality is characterised by local patriotism, dignity and hospitality. The people of this region create a characteristic and similar, yet at the same time diverse, music, wear similar, although slightly varying, traditional clothing. Thanks to this diversity, with so many similarities in numerous areas of life, the Carpathian region, despite being used for centuries, has maintained its natural resources of wildlife flora and fauna in perfect condition. In the Carpathians, there are all animal species that used to live across Europe, such as European bison, lynx, wildcat, wolf, brown bear. There is a number of endemic species, which can be found nowhere else in the world. Great credit for this is due to the ethnically diverse, and yet mentally similar, population of the many countries of the Carpathian region. It is an enormous cultural and natural heritage that should be appreciated and appropriately protected for future generations. This is not only in the interest of the Carpathians, but in the best interest of the unifying Europe. It is manifested by the fact that the Carpathian region is the catchment area of several European seas, and so it impacts the quality and quantity of wa-

ters, not only in the Carpathian countries, but in entire Europe. Pursuing the concept of sustainable development by meeting the obligations of the Convention on Biological Diversity (1992), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992) and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (1994) means also protecting the Carpathian region. Implementation of this concept involves economic growth through carbon dioxide management so as to ensure a decent life for the people and survival of species and to maintain good quality of water and air. This, however, requires international cooperation not only between the countries of the Carpathian region, but also their neighbouring countries. It can be achieved by joint spacial planning in the Carpathian region with regard to communication infrastructure, including agriculture and forestry in the catchment areas in the region. Appropriate spacial planning in the Carpathian region means preserving the Carpathians as the heart and soul of sustainable development of the unifying Europe.

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The development of cooperation within the Carpathian Region – using the potential of Slovakia

Why should we continue to put more effort into developing our cooperation within the Carpathian Region?

The global processes, so pervasive in the modern world and penetrating all aspects of our lives and the lives of our families, nations, states or continents, force the decision-makers – politicians, economists, sociologists, environmental experts and others – to reflect on their actual impact on the quality of human life and to seek out solutions that will allow us to tackle the negative effects of these phenomena. We have come to realise that the incredible technological development, mostly in the field of information technology and digitisation processes present in all areas of human existence, has made it possible to carry out geopolitical integration projects. On the one hand, the tendencies towards integration and liberalisation of processes as part of huge geopolitical groupings help to develop mutual economic cooperation, while on the other, they often pose a threat to the cultural, religious and historical identities of nations, natural human values and human dignity.

It is obvious that Europe is no exception in this regard and that integration processes involved in the European Union project serve as an example of the aforementioned phenomena. Therefore, if we wish to cooperate – and engaging in cooperation is part of human nature – then as the European Community we need to find optimal solutions for a sustainable social policy, founded on the principles of solidarity, subsidiarity, common good and social justice. We must also be mindful of the European Community's underlying values – a kind of Christian DNA and its variations being part of specific national cultures. That is why the national, cultural and Christian identity, based on natural values, is crucial for the European Community.

Unfortunately, today, we are forced to face the rampant ideological ultraliberalism, which has dominated all globalisation processes, also in the



The Subcarpathian village of Vlkolíneec at 1099 MAMSL, in the Great Fatra range, Slovakia

EU. Promoting the ideas of brutal multiculturalism, twisted gender ideology, culture of death, excessive consumerism coupled with the economic protectionism that often follows, presents a significant obstacle to serious cooperation.

Given all these aspects of the development of the current global affairs, in Europe in particular, more attention needs to be paid to strengthening the bonds of regional cooperation that on the one hand will reflect common economic interests and close cultural, religious and historical ties on the other. Cooperation of the Visegrad Four is a good example of this in the EU. Of course, finding as many common points as possible within the framework of particular interests of individual V4 member states necessitates respecting different approaches to individual policies. We also need to acknowledge that cooperation of V4 countries makes for a highly positive complementary aspect of cooperation, that brings a certain geopolitical balance between interests and development across the EU.

It is a shame that representatives of the so-called old member states often view this form of cooperation as anti-integration initiatives.

Despite all obstacles, the actions related to expanding and intensifying broader regional cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe should be commended. In this context, we should stress the regional cooperation that was initiated and continues to be developed, predominantly following the initiative of Polish representatives, be it local, regional or national.

A key proponent of these long-term efforts is the current Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Marek Kuchciński. It is his work that also gave us the series of “Europe of the Carpathians” conferences, which have now become an integral part of the annual Economic Forum in Krynica and serve as a platform for establishing concrete forms of cooperation within the Carpathian Region.

Is Slovakia ready to effectively develop its cooperation with Poland and other countries of the Carpathian Region?

For a long time, the Slovak Republic, particularly through its constitutional representatives, has declared its support for close regional cooperation between the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, mostly as part of the Visegrad Group. Slovakia, along with Poland, Hungary and Czechia, has created an effective mechanism of cooperation, which responds to global geopolitical processes, current events in the EU institutions, as well as specific cooperation programmes within the region.

Despite these apparently successful forms of cooperation on the national level, Slovakia is not sufficiently committed to cooperating under joint development projects carried out across lower levels of administration. Regional and local government entities, business and scientific communities, non-governmental organisations, as well as other actors, all experience a certain deficit of the government’s systemic approach to supporting mutual cooperation in a given region of Central Europe. In order to reduce the said systemic deficit, the aforementioned entities are joining forces to create a network of mutual connections between institutions, which provide a very good platform for joint development projects. Poland–Slovakia Forum, European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), Via Carpathia, Euroregion Tatry are examples of such institutional cooperation.

On the other hand, it should be underlined that in spite of the systemic problems, the regional entities referred to above have been successful in fostering cross-border cooperation, in particular with Poland and Hungary, under the Interreg programme. This is confirmed by numerous joint cross-border projects of self-governing countries, cities and communes, universities and other regional institutions, in the field of developing local infrastructure, tourism, environmental protection, protection of cultural heritage sites, etc.

These successful projects include an initiative called “Marian Route – Light from the East”. Spiritual and Christian traditions provide an excellent foundation for experience tourism. It is the potential of the PL-SK borderland that is historically and geographically designed for building and developing one particular form of tourism – pilgrimage tourism.

What is the key to improved cooperation within the Carpathian Region?

As mentioned above, the Carpathian Region, unlike other regions of Central and Eastern Europe, has a unique aspect to it, namely long-term historical spiritual connections. The worship of Saint Wojciech (Adalbert) and the Cyrillo-Methodian Christian tradition have contributed to strengthening cultural and spiritual bonds in the region for nearly a millennium. Therefore, the current generation has to keep developing these bonds and enrich them through cooperating on each level of social life. Despite the attempts of many national representatives to intensify the development of the Carpathian Region, there are still certain problems with making this development sustainable.

What are then the obstacles to better cooperation within the Carpathian Region?

The economic and political changes of the 1990s brought on a natural revival of closer cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe. The most prominent example of these initiatives is the renewed cooperation between the countries of the Visegrad Group. Another important regional initiative, one started by Poland, is the Three Seas Initiative (Intermarium group or TSI). The initiative is a flexible political platform at the presidential level, dating back to 2015 and now associating 12 EU member states located between the Adriatic, the Baltic and the Black

Sea: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. The objective of the initiative is to facilitate and improve the coordination of regional projects of strategic importance for energy, transport and logistics, as well as for digital communication. Another crucial initiative within the Carpathian Region is the international regional strategy – the Carpathian Strategy, already of institutional nature, which, in turn, may significantly contribute to better coordination of development activities within the region.

When identifying important initiatives conducted within the Carpathian Region, we may not leave out the Eastern Partnership. This is a project of the European Union, also initiated by Poland as part of the European Neighbourhood Policy, and it is aimed at intensifying relations with the six countries located east of the EU. The aforementioned regional initiatives clearly show that there is enough willingness, enthusiasm and inventiveness to establish cooperation across all levels within the Carpathian Region.

Another important condition for successful cooperation is access to funding necessary to carry out projects following from the aforementioned initiatives. The existence of European structural funds, the Consistency Fund and the national operating programmes, as well as specific financial international programmes (INTERREG) provide ample opportunities for funding development projects within the Carpathian Region. Similarly, the projects carried out under the Eastern Partnership initiative can also receive appropriate funding through the financial instrument of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

When summarising the above conditions for better cooperation within the Carpathian Region, it would appear that there are basically no obstacles in the way of an effective cooperation. However, many entities involved in carrying out joint projects under existing programmes and initiatives have expressed their dissatisfaction. They wish to receive more information and would be appreciative of better coordination, less bureaucracy or better access to funding.

Conclusions from many jointly organised events – conferences and seminars – confirm the interest in a more systemic and coordinated approach to carrying out development programmes within the Carpathian Region. Can institutionalisation of the joint development programme for the Carpathian Region be the solution to these needs? Is the proposed Carpathian Strategy a potential solu-



Liptovská Mara Lake near Ružomberok, in the background – the southern side of the Carpathian Mountains, Slovakia

tion to the process of such institutionalisation? The coming months will certainly show whether this solution is positively received in all concerned countries and by relevant entities.

Is the road infrastructure in Slovakia sufficiently developed to support mobility within the Carpathian Region?

It is said that “where there is a road, there is life”. The truth of this maxim finds its confirmation not only in economic analyses by renowned experts in the field, but also in many centuries of ordinary people’s shared experience. However, it seems that the current political powers in Slovakia are not keeping this historical truth in mind when designing their strategic transport infrastructure. Because if they were, the situation where the R4 expressway, meant to connect the northern and southern parts of the least economically developed region of eastern Slovakia and to form part of the European Via Carpathia north–south

transport corridor, is not featured as a priority in the construction of highways and expressways, would not be possible.

The R4 expressway, along with the eastern part of the D1 highway, is to be the core of eastern Slovakia's transport infrastructure, with a potential to bolster the region's economy and employment level. At the same time, it will naturally work towards strengthening cooperation within the Carpathian Region. At present, the situation is that a 70-kilometre section of the R4 expressway from Prešov to the border crossing with Poland (Vyšný Komárnik – Barwinek) is to be completed in 2027, provided that the construction receives sufficient funding. Furthermore, when it comes to completing certain sections of the R4, it is assumed that they will only be completed half-way with two lanes. In the case of proceeding with this solution, the Slovakian section of the Via Carpathia (R4) would rather substantially limit the fluidity of transport on this north–south European connection. We can therefore only hope that the new government will align the construction parameters for this expressway with the provisions of most multilateral agreements related to the Via Carpathia transport corridor, which Slovakia is bound by. Although Slovakia is currently attempting to tackle the aforementioned problems, the medium-term strategy for the development of road infrastructure accounts for the remaining north–south connections (D3, R3). There are also continuous improvements being made to the quality of 1st and 2nd class roads, which fact greatly supports the development of cross-border transport networks and mobility within the Carpathian Region.

What is Slovakia's contribution to increasing the region's energy security?

Similarly to most European countries, Slovakia is largely dependent on importing energy from abroad. This is mostly true for natural gas, with Slovakia covering its entire demand with import, mainly from the Russian Federation. Following the gas crisis of 2009, the representatives of the European Union became aware of how much its member states depend on the gas from Russia. In 2015, Slovakia significantly contributed to eliminating the likelihood of another gas crisis and increasing the security of gas supplies in the region via reverse gas flows, i.e., flow of gas in the reverse direction from Western Europe to Ukraine. It is obvious that the EU has to prepare for a situation when Russia

and Ukraine do not renew the contract for gas deliveries to Western Europe after 2020. Another challenge facing Eastern and Western Europe alike, is the construction of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline. Facing this challenge means hastening the diversification of gas supplies from other suppliers (Norway, North Africa, the USA) and constructing new transmission routes. Slovakia is a good example of such actions, as it is involved in two gas interconnection projects in the north–south gas corridor. The gas interconnection from Slovakia to Hungary has been in operation since 2016; the second interconnection, which will join the Slovak gas transmission system with Poland, is currently under construction and will be finalised in 2021. The project would complete the north–south gas interconnection (LNG) from Poland to Croatia and vice versa.

Another important project to increase energy security in the region is the Eastring project, initiated by a Slovak gas supplier EUSTREAM. This gas pipeline project would connect the main European gas centres with gas sources in the Black Sea and Turkey.

Nobel Prize winners in between the seas Nobel Laureates from the Baltic to the Adriatic Sea

From among the many eminent persons who have influenced the history of civilisation and the world below we listed the Nobel Prize winners who had ties to Central Europe. Their achievements are worth being recalled.

ALBANIA

- **Mother Teresa of Calcutta** (born in 1910 in Skopje, died in 1997) – Albanian nun, founder of the Missionaries of Charity congregation which cares for the abandoned, sick and destitute.
1979 – Nobel Peace Prize for charity work.

AUSTRIA

- **Bertha von Suttner** (born in 1843 in Prague, died in 1914) – Austrian novelist and journalist, the first woman to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.
1905 – Nobel Peace Prize for peace activities.
- **Alfred Hermann Fried** (born in 1864 in Vienna, died in 1921) – Austrian publicist, initiator of peace movements.
1911 – Nobel Peace Prize for peace activities.
- **Julius Wagner-Jauregg** (born in 1857 in Wels, died in 1940) – psychiatrist.
1927 – Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for the discovery of the therapeutic value of malaria inoculation in the treatment of dementia paralytica.
- **Karl Landsteiner** (born in 1868 in Baden, died in 1943) – biologist, physician and immunologist.
1930 – Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for the identification of the three main blood groups.
- **Erwin Schrödinger** (born in 1887 in Vienna, died in 1961) – Austrian theoretical physicist.

1933 – Nobel Prize in Physics for the work on the mathematical formulation of wave mechanics.

- **Otto Loewi** (born in 1873 in Frankfurt, died in 1961) – Austrian pharmacologist.
1936 – Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for research on sympathetic neurons.
- **Victor Franz Hess** (born in 1883 in Peggau, died in 1964) – Austrian-American physicist.
1936 – Nobel Prize in Physics for the discovery of cosmic rays.
- **Wolfgang Pauli** (born in 1900 in Vienna, died in 1958) – Austrian-born Swiss physicist.
1945 – Nobel Prize in Physics for his decisive contribution to the discovery of a new law of nature which was subsequently named the Pauli exclusion principle.
- **Karl von Frisch** (born in 1886 in Vienna, died in 1982) – Austrian biologist and zoologist.
1973 – Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his discoveries concerning the organisation and communication behaviour of bees.
- **Konrad Lorenz** (born in 1903 in Vienna, died in 1989) – Austrian zoologist and ornithologist, founder of modern ethology.
1973 – Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine (together with Karl von Frisch) for discoveries concerning the organisation and communication behaviour of bees.
- **Friedrich Hayek** (born in 1899 in Vienna, died in 1992) – Austrian economist and political philosopher.
1974 – Nobel Memorial Prize in Economics for his “pioneering work in the theory of money and economic fluctuations and [...] penetrating analysis of the interdependence of economic, social and institutional phenomena”.
- **Elias Canetti** (born in 1905 in Vienna, died in 1994) – Austrian writer of Jewish descent.
1981 – Nobel Prize in Literature for “writings marked by a broad outlook, a wealth of ideas and artistic power”.
- **Elfriede Jelinek** (born in 1946 in Mürzzuschlag, Austria) – Austrian writer and feminist.

2004 – Nobel Prize in Literature for revealing society’s clichés and their absurdity in novels and plays.

- **Martin Karplus** (born in 1930 in Vienna) – Austrian-born American chemist. 2013 – Nobel Prize in Chemistry for the development of multiscale models of complex chemical systems.

BELARUS

- **Svetlana Alexievich** (born in 1948 in Ivano-Frankivsk) – Belarusian-Ukrainian writer and journalist. 2015 – Nobel Prize in Literature for “her polyphonic writings, a monument to suffering and courage in our time”.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA / SERBIA

- **Ivo Andrić** (born in 1892 r. in the village of Dolac, near Travnik, died in 1975) – novelist, poet and short story writer Yugoslav. 1961 – Nobel Prize in Literature for his writings on Bosnia under the Turkish rule.

CROATIA

- **Leopold Stjepan Ružička** (born in 1887 in Vienna, died in 1976) – Croatian-born Swiss chemist. 1939 – Nobel Prize in Chemistry in recognition of his work on polymethylens and higher terpenes.
- **Vladimir Prelog** (born in 1906 in Sarajevo, died in 1998) – Croatian-born chemist. 1975 – Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his research into the stereochemistry of organic molecules and reactions.

CZECH REPUBLIC

- **Carl Ferdinand Cori** (born in 1896 in Prague, died in 1984) – Czech-American biochemist and pharmacologist.

1947 – Nobel Prize in Chemistry for identifying and synthesizing glycogen phosphorylase.

- **Jaroslav Heyrovský** (born in 1890 in Prague, died in 1967) – Czech chemist.
1959 – Nobel Prize in Chemistry for the discovery and development of the polarographic methods of analysis.
- **Jaroslav Seifert** (born in 1901 in Žižkov, died in 1986) – Czech chemist.
1984 – Nobel Prize in Literature for “his poetry which endowed with freshness, sensuality and rich inventiveness provides a liberating image of the indomitable spirit and versatility of man”.

HUNGARY

- **Robert Bárány** (born in 1876 in Vienna, died in 1936) – Austrian physician of Hungarian-Jewish descent.
1914 – Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his work on the physiology and pathology of the vestibular apparatus.
- **Albert Szent-Györgyi** (born in 1893 in Budapest, died in 1986) – Hungarian biochemist.
1937 – Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his discoveries in connection with the biological combustion processes.
- **George de Hevesy** (born in 1885 in Budapest, died in 1966) – Hungarian physicist and chemist.
1943 – Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his key role in the development of radioactive tracers to study chemical processes.
- **Georg von Békésy** (born in 1899 in Budapest, died in 1972) – American physicist and physiologist of Hungarian descent.
1961 – Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his research on the function of the cochlea in the mammalian hearing organ.
- **Eugene Paul Wigner** (born in 1902 in Budapest, died in 1995) – Hungarian-American physicist and mathematician.
1963 – Nobel Prize in Physics for his contributions to the theory of the atomic nucleus and the elementary particles.

- **Dennis Gabor** (born in 1900 in Budapest, died in 1979) – Hungarian physicist of Jewish descent.
1971 – Nobel Prize in Physics for his work on the holographic method.
- **George Andrew Olah** (born in 1927 in Budapest, died in 2017) – American chemist of Hungarian descent.
1994 – Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his contribution to carbocation chemistry.
- **Imre Kertész** (born in 1929 in Budapest, died in 2016) – Hungarian writer of Jewish descent.
2002 – Nobel Prize in Literature for “writing that upholds the fragile experience of the individual against the barbaric arbitrariness of history”.
- **Avram Hershko** (born in 1937 in Karcag, Hungary) – Hungarian-born Israeli biologist.
2004 – Nobel Prize in Chemistry for the discovery of ubiquitin-mediated protein degradation.

POLAND

- **Maria Skłodowska-Curie** (born in 1867 in Warsaw, died in 1934) – Polish chemist and physicist.
1903 – Nobel Prize in Physics for her research on radioactivity.
- **Henryk Sienkiewicz** (born in 1846 in Wola Okrzejska, died in 1916) – Polish writer, novelist and publicist.
1905 – Nobel Prize in Literature for his outstanding merits as an epic writer.
- **Albert Abraham Michelson** (born in 1852 in Strzelno, died in 1931) – American physicist of Polish-Jewish descent.
1907 – Nobel Prize in Physics for the construction of the interferometer.
- **Maria Skłodowska-Curie** (born in 1867 in Warsaw, died in 1934) – Polish chemist and physicist.
1911 – Nobel Prize in Chemistry for the discovery of polonium and radium, research on the metallic state of radium and its compounds as well as contribution to the development of chemistry.

- **Władysław Reymont** (born in 1867 in Kobieles Wielkie, died in 1925) – Polish writer and novelist.
1924 – Nobel Prize in Literature for his novel “Chłopi” (“The Peasants”).
- **Irène Joliot-Curie** (born in 1897 in Paris, died in 1956) – French scientist of Polish descent.
1935 – Nobel Prize in Chemistry for the discovery of artificial radioactivity.
- **Isidor Isaac Rabi** (born in 1898 in Rymanów, died in 1988) – American physicist of Polish-Jewish descent.
1944 – Nobel Prize in Physics for the discovery of nuclear magnetic resonance.
- **Tadeusz Reichstein** (born in 1897 in Włocławek, died in 1996) – Polish-Swiss biochemist.
1950 – Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his work on the hormones of the adrenal cortex which culminated in the isolation of cortisone.
- **Andrew Schally** (born in 1926 in Vilnius) – American biochemist and physician of Polish descent.
1977 – Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for the discoveries concerning the peptide hormone production of the brain.
- **Isaac Bashevis Singer** (born in 1902 in Leoncin, died in 1991) – Polish-American writer of Jewish descent.
1978 – Nobel Prize in Literature for his “impassioned narrative art which, with roots in a Polish-Jewish cultural tradition, brings universal human conditions to life”.
- **Menachem Begin** (born in 1913 in Brest-Litowsk, died in 1992) – Israeli politician of Polish-Jewish descent, Prime Minister of Israel (twice).
1978 – Nobel Peace Prize for signing a peace treaty with Egypt in Camp David.
- **Czesław Miłosz** (born in 1911 in Sztejnie, died in 2004) – Polish poet, prose writer, historian of literature and translator.
1980 – Nobel Prize in Literature for his “uncompromising clear-sightedness in exposing man’s threats in a world of severe conflicts”.
- **Roald Hoffmann** (born in 1937 in Złoczów) – Polish-American chemist of Jewish descent.
1981 – Nobel Prize in Chemistry for the development of theories concerning the course of chemical reactions.

- **Lech Wałęsa** (born in 1943 in Popowo) – Polish politician and labour activist, head oppositionist in the period of the Polish People’s Republic, President of Poland in the period 1990-1995.
1983 – Nobel Peace Prize for his contribution to building freedom behind the Iron Curtain.
- **Georges Charpak** (born in 1924 in Dąbrowica, died in 2010) – French physicist of Polish-Jewish descent.
1992 – Nobel Prize in Physics for his contribution to the development of particle detectors.
- **Shimon Peres** (born in 1923 in Vishneva, died in 2016) – Israeli politician of Polish-Jewish descent, President of Israel and Prime Minister of Israel (twice).
1994 – Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to create peace in the Middle East.
- **Józef Rotblat** (born in 1908 in Warsaw, died in 2005) – Polish physicist and radiobiologist of Jewish descent.
1995 – Nobel Peace Prize for his fight against nuclear arms in the world.
- **Wisława Szymborska** (born in 1923 in Kórnik, died in 2012) – Polish poet, essayist and translator.
1996 – Nobel Prize in Literature for “poetry that with ironic precision allows the historical and biological context to come to light in fragments of human reality”.
- **Leonid Hurwicz** (born in 1917 in Moscow, died in 2008) – Polish-American economist of Jewish descent.
2007 – Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences for having laid the foundations of mechanism design theory.

ROMANIA

- **Stefan Hell** (born in 1962 in Arad, Romania) – Romanian-born German physicist.
2014 – Nobel Prize in Chemistry for the development of super-resolved fluorescence microscopy.

SLOVENIA/AUSTRIA

- **Fritz Pregl** (born in 1869 in Ljubljana, died in 1930) – professor of chemistry of Slovenian and Austrian descent.
1923 – Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his contribution to quantitative organic microanalysis.

UKRAINE

- **Élie Metchnikoff** (born in 1845 in Ivanovka, died in 1916) – Ukrainian-Russian zoologist and microbiologist.
1908 – Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his contributions in the field of immunology.
- **Selman Abraham Waksman** (born in 1888 in Nova Pryluka, died in 1973) – American biochemist and microbiologist of Ukrainian descent.
1952 – Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for the discovery of streptomycin which is used in antibiotics.

“Europe of the Carpathians” Documents



States Parties to the Carpathian Convention

FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CARPATHIANS

“The Parties”,

ACKNOWLEDGING that the Carpathians are a unique natural treasure of great beauty and ecological value, an important reservoir of biodiversity, the headwaters of major rivers, an essential habitat and refuge for many endangered species of plants and animals and Europe’s largest area of virgin forests, and AWARE that the Carpathians constitute a major ecological, economic, cultural, recreational and living environment in the heart of Europe, shared by numerous peoples and countries;

REALIZING the importance and ecological, cultural and socio-economic value of mountain regions, which prompted the United Nations General Assembly to declare 2002 the International Year of Mountains;

RECOGNIZING the importance of Mountain areas, as enshrined in Chapter 13 (Sustainable Mountain Development) of the Declaration on Environment and Development (“Agenda 21”, Rio de Janeiro, 1992), and in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development;

RECALLING the Declaration on Environment and Sustainable Development in the Carpathian and Danube Region (Bucharest, 2001);

NOTING the pertinent provisions of and principles enshrined in relevant global, regional and sub-regional environmental legal instruments, strategies and programmes;

AIMING at ensuring a more effective implementation of such already existing instruments, and BUILDING upon other international programmes;

RECOGNIZING that the Carpathians constitute the living environment for the local people, and ACKNOWLEDGING the contribution of the local people to sustainable social, cultural and economic development, and to preserving traditional knowledge in the Carpathians;

ACKNOWLEDGING the importance of sub-regional cooperation for the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians in the context of the ‘Environment for Europe’ process;

RECOGNIZING the experience gained in the framework of the Convention on the Protection of the Alps (Salzburg, 1991) as a successful model for the protection of the environment and sustainable development of mountain regions, providing a sound basis for new partnership initiatives and further strengthening of cooperation between Alpine and Carpathian states;

BEING AWARE of the fact that efforts to protect, maintain and sustainably manage the natural resources of the Carpathians cannot be achieved by one country alone and require regional cooperation, and of the added value of transboundary cooperation in achieving ecological coherence;

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1

Geographical Scope

1. The Convention applies to the Carpathian region (hereinafter referred to as the “Carpathians”), to be defined by the Conference of the Parties.
2. Each Party may extend the application of this Convention and its Protocols to additional parts of its national territory by making a declaration to the Depository, provided that this is necessary to implement the provisions of the Convention.

Article 2

General objectives and principles

1. The Parties shall pursue a comprehensive policy and cooperate for the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians with a view to inter alia improving quality of life, strengthening local economies and communities, and conservation of natural values and cultural heritage.
2. In order to achieve the objectives referred to in paragraph 1, the Parties shall take appropriate measures, in the areas covered by Articles 4 to 13 of this Convention by promoting:
 - (a) the precaution and prevention principles,
 - (b) the ‘polluter pays’ principle,
 - (c) public participation and stakeholder involvement,
 - (d) transboundary cooperation,

- (e) integrated planning and management of land and water resources,
 - (f) a programmatic approach, and
 - (g) the ecosystem approach.
3. To achieve the objectives set forth in this Convention and to ensure its implementation, the Parties may, as appropriate, develop and adopt Protocols.

Article 3

Integrated approach to the land resources management

The Parties shall apply the approach of the integrated land resources management as defined in Chapter 10 of the Agenda 21, by developing and implementing appropriate tools, such as integrated management plans, relating to the areas of this Convention.

Article 4

Conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity

1. The Parties shall pursue policies aiming at conservation, sustainable use and restoration of biological and landscape diversity throughout the Carpathians. The Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure a high level of protection and sustainable use of natural and semi-natural habitats, their continuity and connectivity, and species of flora and fauna being characteristic to the Carpathians, in particular the protection of endangered species, endemic species and large carnivores.
2. The Parties shall promote adequate maintenance of semi-natural habitats, the restoration of degraded habitats, and support the development and implementation of relevant management plans.
3. The Parties shall pursue policies aiming at the prevention of introduction of alien invasive species and release of genetically modified organisms threatening ecosystems, habitats or species, their control or eradication.
4. The Parties shall develop and/or promote compatible monitoring systems, coordinated regional inventories of species and habitats, coordinated scientific research, and their networking
5. The Parties shall cooperate in developing an ecological network in the Carpathians, as a constituent part of the Pan-European Ecological Network, in establishing and supporting a Carpathian Network of Protected Areas, as well as

enhance conservation and sustainable management in the areas outside of protected areas.

6. The Parties shall take appropriate measures to integrate the objective of conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity into sectoral policies, such as mountain agriculture, mountain forestry, river basin management, tourism, transport and energy, industry and mining activities.

Article 5

Spatial planning

1. The Parties shall pursue policies of spatial planning aimed at the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians, which shall take into account the specific ecological and socio-economic conditions in the Carpathians and their mountain ecosystems, and provide benefits to the local people.
2. The Parties shall aim at coordinating spatial planning in bordering areas, through developing transboundary and/or regional spatial planning policies and programmes, enhancing and supporting co-operation between relevant regional and local institutions.
3. In developing spatial planning policies and programmes, particular attention should, *inter alia*, be paid to:
 - (a) transboundary transport, energy and telecommunications infrastructure and services,
 - (b) conservation and sustainable use of natural resources,
 - (c) coherent town and country planning in border areas,
 - (d) preventing the cross-border impact of pollution,
 - (e) integrated land use planning, and environmental impact assessments.

Article 6

Sustainable and integrated water/river basin management

Taking into account the hydrological, biological and ecological, and other specificities of mountain river basins, the Parties shall:

- (a) take appropriate measures to promote policies integrating sustainable use of water resources, with land-use planning, and aim at pursuing policies and

plans based on an integrated river basin management approach, recognizing the importance of pollution and flood management, prevention and control, and reducing water habitats fragmentation,

- (b) pursue policies aiming at sustainable management of surface and groundwater resources, ensuring adequate supply of good quality surface and groundwater as needed for sustainable, balanced and equitable water use, and adequate sanitation and treatment of waste water,
- (c) pursue policies aiming at conserving natural watercourses, springs, lakes and groundwater resources as well as preserving and protecting wetlands and wetland ecosystems, and protecting against natural and anthropogenic detrimental effects such as flooding and accidental water pollution,
- (d) further develop a coordinated or joint system of measures, activities and early warning for transboundary impacts on the water regime of flooding and accidental water pollution, as well as co-operate in preventing and reducing the damages and giving assistance in restoration works.

Article 7

Sustainable agriculture and forestry

1. The Parties shall maintain the management of land traditionally cultivated in a sustainable manner, and take appropriate measures in designing and implementing their agricultural policies, taking into account the need of the protection of mountain ecosystems and landscapes, the importance of biological diversity, and the specific conditions of mountains as less favoured areas.
2. The Parties shall pursue policies aiming at developing and designing appropriate instruments, such as the crucially important agri-environmental programmes in the Carpathians, enhancing integration of environmental concerns into agricultural policies and land management plans, while taking into account the high ecological importance of Carpathian mountain ecosystems, such as natural and semi-natural grasslands, as part of the ecological networks, landscapes and traditional land-use.
3. The Parties shall pursue policies aiming at promoting and supporting the use of instruments and programmes, compatible with internationally agreed principles of sustainable forest management.
4. The Parties shall apply sustainable mountain forest management practices in the Carpathians, taking into account the multiple functions of forests, the high

ecological importance of the Carpathian mountain ecosystems, as well as the less favourable conditions in mountain forests.

5. The Parties shall pursue policies aiming at designating protected areas in natural, especially virgin forests in sufficient size and number, with the purpose to restrict or adapt their use according to the objectives of conservation to be achieved.
6. The Parties shall promote practice of environmentally sound agricultural and forestry measures assuring appropriate retention of precipitation in the mountains with a view to better prevent flooding and increase safety of life and assets.

Article 8

Sustainable transport and infrastructure

1. The Parties shall pursue policies of sustainable transport and infrastructure planning and development, which take into account the specificities of the mountain environment, by taking into consideration the protection of sensitive areas, in particular biodiversity-rich areas, migration routes or areas of international importance, the protection of biodiversity and landscapes, and of areas of particular importance for tourism.
2. The Parties shall cooperate towards developing sustainable transport policies which provide the benefits of mobility and access in the Carpathians, while minimizing harmful effects on human health, landscapes, plants, animals, and their habitats, and incorporating sustainable transport demand management in all stages of transport planning in the Carpathians.
3. In environmentally sensitive areas the Parties shall co-operate towards developing models of environmentally friendly transportation.

Article 9

Sustainable tourism

1. The Parties shall take measures to promote sustainable tourism in the Carpathians, providing benefits to the local people, based on the exceptional nature, landscapes and cultural heritage of the Carpathians, and shall increase cooperation to this effect.
2. Parties shall pursue policies aiming at promoting transboundary cooperation in order to facilitate sustainable tourism development, such as coordinated or

joint management plans for transboundary or bordering protected areas, and other sites of touristic interest.

Article 10

Industry and energy

1. The Parties shall promote cleaner production technologies, in order to adequately prevent, respond to and remediate industrial accidents and their consequences, as well as to preserve human health and mountain ecosystems.
2. The Parties shall pursue policies aiming at introducing environmentally sound methods for the production, distribution and use of energy, which minimize adverse effects on the biodiversity and landscapes, including wider use of renewable energy sources and energy-saving measures, as appropriate.
3. Parties shall aim at reducing adverse impacts of mineral exploitation on the environment and ensuring adequate environmental surveillance on mining technologies and practices.

Article 11

Cultural heritage and traditional knowledge

The Parties shall pursue policies aiming at preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage and of traditional knowledge of the local people, crafting and marketing of local goods, arts and handicrafts. The Parties shall aim at preserving the traditional architecture, land-use patterns, local breeds of domestic animals and cultivated plant varieties, and sustainable use of wild plants in the Carpathians.

Article 12

Environmental assessment/information system, monitoring and early warning

1. The Parties shall apply, where necessary, risk assessments, environmental impact assessments, and strategic environmental assessments, taking into account the specificities of the Carpathian mountain ecosystems, and shall consult on projects of transboundary character in the Carpathians, and assess their environmental impact, in order to avoid transboundary harmful effects.
2. The Parties shall pursue policies, using existing methods of monitoring and assessment, aiming at promoting:

- (a) cooperation in the carrying out of research activities and scientific assessments in the Carpathians,
- (b) joint or complementary monitoring programmes, including the systematic monitoring of the state of the environment,
- (c) comparability, complementarity and standardization of research methods and related data-acquisition activities,
- (d) harmonization of existing and development of new environmental, social and economic indicators,
- (e) a system of early warning, monitoring and assessment of natural and man-made environmental risks and hazards, and
- (f) an information system, accessible to all Parties.

Article 13

Awareness raising, education and public participation

1. The Parties shall pursue policies aiming at increasing environmental awareness and improving access of the public to information on the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians, and promoting related education curricula and programmes.
2. The Parties shall pursue policies guaranteeing public participation in decision-making relating to the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians, and the implementation of this Convention.

Article 14

Conference of the Parties

1. A Conference of the Parties (hereinafter referred to as the “Conference”) is hereby established.
2. The Conference shall discuss common concerns of the Parties and make the decisions necessary to promote the effective implementation of the Convention. In particular, it shall:
 - (a) regularly review and support the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols,
 - (b) adopt amendments to the Convention pursuant to Article 19,
 - (c) adopt Protocols, including amendments thereto, pursuant to Articles 18,

- (d) nominate its President and establish an intersessional executive body, as appropriate and in accordance with its Rules of Procedure,
 - (e) establish such subsidiary bodies, including thematic working groups, as are deemed necessary for the implementation of the Convention, regularly review reports submitted by its subsidiary bodies and provide guidance to them,
 - (f) approve a work programme, financial rules and budget for its activities, including those of its subsidiary bodies and the Secretariat, and undertake necessary arrangements for their financing pursuant to Article 17,
 - (g) adopt its Rules of Procedure,
 - (h) adopt or recommend measures to achieve the objectives laid down in Articles 2 to 13,
 - (i) as appropriate, seek the cooperation of competent bodies or agencies, whether national or international, governmental or non-governmental and promote and strengthen the relationship with other relevant conventions while avoiding duplication of efforts, and
 - (j) exercise other functions as may be necessary for the achievement of the objectives of the Convention.
3. The first session of the Conference shall be convened not later than one year after the date of entry into force of the Convention. Unless otherwise decided by the Conference, ordinary sessions shall be held every three years.
4. Extraordinary sessions of the Conference shall be held at such other times as may be decided either by the Conference at ordinary session or at the written request of any Party, provided that, within three months of the request being communicated to all the other Parties by the Secretariat, it is supported by at least one third of the Parties.
5. The Parties may decide to admit as observers at the ordinary and extraordinary sessions of the Conference:
- (a) any other State,
 - (b) any national, intergovernmental or non-governmental organization the activities of which are related to the Convention.

The conditions for the admission and participation of observers shall be established in the Rules of Procedure. Such observers may present any information or report relevant to the objectives of the Convention.

6. The Conference shall reach its decisions by consensus.

Article 15

Secretariat

1. A Secretariat is hereby established.
2. The functions of the Secretariat shall be:
 - (a) to make arrangements for sessions of the Conference and to provide them with services as required,
 - (b) to compile and transmit reports submitted to it,
 - (c) to coordinate its activities with the secretariats of other relevant international bodies and conventions,
 - (d) to prepare reports on the exercising of its functions under this Convention and its Protocols, including financial reports, and present them to the Conference,
 - (e) to facilitate research, communication and information exchange on matters relating to this Convention, and
 - (f) to perform other secretariat functions as may be determined by the Conference.

Article 16

Subsidiary bodies

The subsidiary bodies, including thematic working groups established in accordance with Article 14 paragraph 2 (e), shall provide the Conference, as necessary, with technical assistance, information and advice on specific issues related to the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians.

Article 17

Financial contributions

Each Party shall contribute to the regular budget of the Convention in accordance with a scale of contributions as determined by the Conference.

Article 18

Protocols

1. Any Party may propose Protocols to the Convention.
2. The draft Protocols shall be circulated to all Parties through the Secretariat not later than six months before the Conference session at which they are to be considered.
3. The Protocols shall be adopted and signed at the Conference sessions. The entry into force, amendment of and withdrawal from the Protocols shall be done *mutatis mutandis* in accordance with Articles 19, 21 paragraphs 2 to 4 and Article 22 of the Convention. Only a Party to the Convention may become Party to the Protocols.

Article 19

Amendments to the Convention

1. Any Party may propose amendments to the Convention.
2. The proposed amendments shall be circulated to all Parties to the Convention through the Secretariat not later than six months before the Conference session at which the amendments are to be considered.
3. The Conference shall adopt the proposed amendments to the Convention by consensus.
4. The amendments to the Convention shall be subject to ratification, approval or acceptance. The amendments shall enter into force on the ninetieth day after the date of deposit of the fourth instrument of ratification, approval or acceptance. Thereafter, the amendments shall enter into force for any other Party on the ninetieth day after the date of deposit of its instrument of ratification, approval or acceptance.

Article 20

Settlements of disputes

The Parties shall settle disputes arising from the interpretation or implementation of the Convention by negotiation or any other means of dispute settlement in accordance with international law.

Article 21

Entry into force

1. This Convention shall be open for signature at the Depositary from 22 May 2003 to 22 May 2004.
2. This Convention shall be subject to ratification, acceptance, or approval by the Signatories. The Convention shall be open for accession by non-Signatories. Instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval and accession shall be deposited with the Depositary.
3. The Convention shall enter into force on the ninetieth day after the date of deposit of the fourth instrument of ratification, approval, acceptance or accession.
4. Thereafter the Convention shall enter into force for any other Party on the ninetieth day from the date of deposit of its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.

Article 22

Withdrawal

Any Party may withdraw from the Convention by means of a notification in writing addressed to the Depositary. The withdrawal shall become effective on the one hundred eightieth day after the date of the receipt of the notification by the Depositary.

Article 23

Depositary

1. The Depositary of the Convention shall be the Government of Ukraine.
2. The Depositary shall notify all the other Parties of
 - (a) any signature of the Convention and its Protocols,
 - (b) the deposit of any instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession,
 - (c) the date of entry into force of the Convention as well as its Protocols or amendments thereto, and the date of their entry into force for any other Party,
 - (d) any notifications of withdrawal from the Convention or its Protocols and the date on which such withdrawal becomes effective for a particular Party,
 - (e) the deposit of any declaration according to Article 1 paragraph 2.

Carpathian Memorandum, 8 September 2011

The Carpathians constitute an important part of Europe's regional heritage. It is an area of substantial social, cultural and natural resources, but at the same time one of the poorest and least recognized regions which requires coordinated support under European policy. The Carpathians are characterized by several important assets:

First, they connect, beyond the present European Union borders, the territories of strategic importance – from the very core of Central Europe: Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, through Ukraine, to the Balkans including Romania and Serbia. Second, they are a unique treasure of the natural environment, being a “green backbone” of Central and Eastern Europe. Third, it is a region of cultural and social importance, inhabited by 20 million people. The Carpathians are also a region fraught with problems.

Its major weaknesses are as follows: gaps in infrastructure with regard to transport as well as environmental safety, lack of due care of sustainable development, social problems, including areas characterized by high unemployment. If we do not take coordinated development-oriented measures, social and economic problems of the Carpathian region will increase. Therefore, we are of the opinion that efforts of the states, the European Union and regional authorities should be combined in order to work out a joint strategy for the Carpathians, which would enable to overcome the weaknesses of the region, while making use of its assets.

Such strategy, following the Baltic Sea Strategy and the Danube Strategy, should be primarily based on synergy between the existing initiatives and measures taken in this region, thereby constituting value added, without leading to the establishment of new structures, regulations or institutions.

We want to seek financing for measures in the Carpathians area in a coordinated manner so that funds, in particular those obtained from the Community budget, are not dispersed but strategically targeted at joint Carpathian projects. The mechanism for financing joint measures aimed at Carpathian development might be created based on the models provided by the present EU macro-regional development strategies as well as such initiatives as the European Programme “Alpine Space”.

The number of the existing good practices and initiatives in the Carpathian region makes us confident that, provided there is an appropriately drawn-up strategy, we may in a relatively short time bring about the desired, specific effects of the new initiative, be it with regard to academic (“Carpathian University”), environmental, or infrastructural cooperation or in an inter-regional project “Carpathian Horizon”.



The Palace of the Romanian Parliament, Bucharest

Such cooperation will, in particular, lead to closer links between EU member states and Ukraine, thereby contributing to faster integration of the country into European structures. The first step that might symbolically, but also practically prove the involvement of the European policy in the Carpathian region, would be accession of the European Union, as a party, to the Carpathian Convention whose signatories are at present individual states. Having acquired such capacity pursuant to the Lisbon Treaty, the European Union should make use of it in such initiatives.

Our common objective is to draw up a new macro-regional development strategy as early as in the next financing framework 2014–2020. This is possible, if support is provided by major European policy actors at the level of subsequent presidencies as well as the European Commission and the European Parliament.

We appeal for such involvement. The Carpathians are worthy of the European strategy.

Conclusions adopted at the conference “Europe of the Carpathians” on 4–6 September 2012

1. The Carpathian region is important for the whole Europe. Supporting development actions within the Carpathians can provide an impulse for growth to the entire EU

On the eve of the day of conclusive decisions regarding the upcoming 2014–2020 EU financial perspective, it is important to stress the significance that the cohesion policy has for the implementation of one of the most important community goals – the harmonious socio-economic growth of the entire Union. Financial support for development actions within the Carpathian region will not only contribute to the EU’s economic growth, and help combat unemployment and social exclusion, but should also play an important part in the search for a new potential to regain growth dynamic.

We cannot afford to watch Europe not making full use of the resources located in the Carpathian region. Today, it is more problematic because of infrastructural barriers, the lack of appropriate dedicated programmes supporting regional cooperation, and border difficulties.

That is why we should strive to overcome these obstacles and to activate special cooperation programmes on local and regional levels adopted within the framework of the 2014–2020 financial perspective.

We encourage the governments and local governments of the Carpathian states to pursue such initiatives. They could be considered “pilot projects” for the future macro-regional Carpathian Strategy of the European Union.

2. The cooperation of national parliaments under the “Carpathian Network of Parliamentary Cooperation” should constitute an important element of Carpathian cooperation

The cooperation within the Carpathian region should not only limit itself to contacts on the governmental level and cooperation between local governments. Lively contacts of national parliaments should be an important element of that cooperation. Those parliamentary contacts could be an important platform for the exchange of experiences, joint ventures of an international character, and could be used to coordinate policy within the Carpathian region.



The building of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Kiev

These needs gave rise to the initiative to establish “Carpathian Parliamentary Groups” in all the participating states’ parliaments (either Carpathian Groups or Carpathian Clubs, depending on the naming conventions of a given country). These groups would be constituted by parliamentarians from various parties and with different areas of expertise, brought together by the idea of Carpathian cooperation. Such groups, working jointly, would create a neutral “Carpathian Network of Parliamentary Cooperation” and would therefore become a foundation of an authentic cooperation in the fields of detailed issues from the domains of infrastructure, environment, economy, or culture.

3. Local entrepreneurship connected to common good should have a priority over transnational investors

The Carpathian area is a special economic region in which investments and development must harmoniously co-exist with an environment rich in natural resources that are the treasure of the Carpathian states. Therefore, supporting

tourism and all the different services connected to it, the attention should be drawn to guarantee the national possession of natural goods, natural parks in particular. Local communities should be supported in such a way as to be able to cope with the competition coming from transnational investors.

4. The natural environment of the Carpathians is an element of European cultural heritage. In order to better protect it, European Union should become a party to the Carpathian Convention

Nature in the Carpathians is a unique natural resource on a European scale. Therefore, it requires constant protection and creation of such development models for the area which will not violate the natural harmony of man and the ecosystem. The Carpathians should not be an open-air ethnographic museum for the rest of Europe. They need to develop and enrich themselves, but not at the cost of their natural environment. Therefore, it is especially important for the European Union, acting as an international organisation and within the boundaries of the Lisbon Treaty, to become a party to the Carpathian Convention that guarantees a sustainable growth for this region.

Krasiczyn Declaration, 23 February 2013

We, the participants of the “Europe of the Carpathians” conference in Krasiczyn, share the belief that the Carpathians are an important part of the European regional heritage. With its unique features, the Carpathians are today one of the two major mountain regions of Europe. After the recent enlargement of the European Union, they also form its eastern border, which significantly raises the importance of the area in ensuring sustainable development and cohesion of the EU.

Nowadays, the inhabitants of the Carpathian macro-region must face a number of difficulties. Without specific developmental measures, the situation of the Carpathian population will continue to deteriorate due to the absence of transport infrastructure and visible social gaps, including a high rate of structural unemployment. Action for the modernisation and development of the Carpathian macro-region is essential not only from the point of view of selected Member States, but the entire European Union, particularly in the context of its future enlargement to the east, which is why we want to support Ukraine’s European aspirations.

We believe it is necessary to coordinate actions for the Carpathians in many areas. The essence of these actions should be to consolidate international, regional and cross-border cooperation in the economic, social and cultural dimensions, so that the macro-region can present a coherent development vision in the European Union. Only a joint effort of societies, parliaments, governments and local authorities of the Carpathian countries will offer opportunities for effective promotion of Carpathian interests on the European forum.

National parliaments could play an important role here by creating the Carpathian Network of Parliamentary Cooperation. Such a network should enable regular contacts between parliamentarians from the Carpathian countries in all areas of their interest. An important step towards the creation of such a network will be the establishment of Carpathian parliamentary groups in individual national parliaments and in the European Parliament and, in the future, considering the establishment of a Carpathian parliamentary assembly.

We would like to emphasise the importance of the Association of the Carpathian Euroregion as an institution coordinating and stimulating activity for the development of this region. We support the call for the creation of a trans-national operational programme of European Territorial Cooperation for the Carpathian Euroregion for 2014–2020 under the name “Carpathian Horizon 2020”. Such a solution would contribute to improving the coordination and enhancing the effectiveness of the ex-

isting EU financial instruments supporting multilateral territorial cooperation. This programme should cover all territories which decide to join it.

At the same time, we call upon the European Union to more actively support the objectives laid down in the Carpathian Convention, signed in Kiev on 23 May 2003, and to expedite activities aimed at formal accession of the EU to that convention as a party. In particular, it is necessary to strengthen cooperation with respect to water and forest management. We also recognise the importance of completing the tasks specified in the Protocol on sustainable tourism to the Carpathian Convention.

We welcome numerous examples of cross-border cooperation of partners from the Carpathian countries. We consider starting work on publishing the Carpathian Encyclopaedia is an extremely valuable initiative. To this end, we are establishing a working group of representatives of several universities interested in Carpathian-related issues.

We are attentively tracking the progress of the renovation of the former Astronomical Observatory on the peak of Pop Ivan in the Chornohora range and the construction of an academic cooperation centre in Mykulychyn. Both initiatives are operated jointly by the University of Warsaw and the Precarpathian National University in Ivano-Frankivsk.

We note the common shepherd traditions, which have belonged to the basic activities of the Carpathian highlanders for many centuries. In this respect, an initiative worth spreading is this year's international Carpathian Sheep Transhumance 2013 as a traditional sheep migration starting from Romania, and passing through Ukraine, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic.

Further expansion of border infrastructure will greatly facilitate the development of cooperation between the Carpathian countries belonging to the European Union and Ukraine. This is why we are strongly in favour of increasing the number of border crossings on Ukraine's eastern border.

Moreover, responding to unanimous demands and opinions of circles and institutions connected with the sector of public and private media operating in the Carpathian region, we declare our support for the initiative of creating an international platform for the cooperation of Carpathian media in order to promote, develop and implement effective information exchange systems.

We would also like to emphasise that the main objective of all actions should be creating a European macro-regional development strategy for the Carpathians, with the involvement of all interested countries and regions, as well as European institutions. Drafting the strategy would be crucial for territorial cohesion and consolidating



The building of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, Prague

cooperation not only between the Carpathian countries and regions, but also between the European Union and its eastern partners. The main focus of the Macro-regional Carpathian Strategy (“Carpathia 2020” – CEEC – Co-operation, Economy, Environment, Culture) should be cooperation, including economic growth, environmental protection and culture. The inclusion of the Via Carpathia road in the trans-European transport networks TEN-T should be part of this strategy. The road, which runs through the eastern areas of the EU, should become a core around which sustainable development of the entire Carpathian macro-region would be wrapped.

Krynica Memorandum, 8 September 2013

The participants in the “Europe of the Carpathians” conference have resolved as follows:

1. To suggest to national parliaments that Carpathian parliamentary groups be formed. The next step might involve taking action to establish Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of Central and Eastern Europe. The Assembly should become a forum of permanent cooperation between parliamentarians from the countries of the region. Its objective ought to be action for self-reliant development of Central and Eastern Europe. Due to their parliamentary nature, measures taken by the Assembly will unite politicians from different political divisions, thereby guaranteeing the stability of collaboration regardless of government changes.
2. To take action to set up inter-groups in the European Parliament that would be engaged in Carpathian cooperation.
3. To act on the European Union level and vis-a-vis Carpathian states’ governments, in order to promote and implement the concept of the EU macro-regional strategy for the Carpathian area. By combining development-oriented efforts of the EU, states and regions, the strategy should become a strong impulse for sustainable and dynamic growth of this part of Europe. We consider as particularly important the development of traditional sectors of the economy, agriculture, tourism, actions in favour of national culture and extension of the infrastructure connecting our countries. These priorities should be appropriately included in the operational programmes aimed at spending UE funds under financial perspective 2014–2020.
4. To support the idea of protecting the cultural and natural heritage and environment of the Carpathians through the Carpathian Convention, in particular to expand the impact of this initiative on other countries of the region and international organisations.
5. To act with the view to initiate regular meetings of intellectuals from Central and Eastern Europe whose goal would be to reflect on the European identity and to work on expanding and promoting the knowledge of our region. This initiative involves the idea of establishing the Carpathian University whose objective is to conduct research aimed at comprehensive development and to popularise it among academic and educational communities.

Krynica Declaration, 3 September 2014

The war in Ukraine is the greatest threat to security in Europe since the end of the cold war.

The threat is due to the fact that once again, after the Russian-Georgian war in 2008, Russian aggression changes the borders using force and aims at recognizing it as a permanent status.

Crimea annexation and occupation and entry of Russian troops in the territory of Eastern Ukraine are a violation of fundamental rules of international law, undermining the principle of territorial integrity and state sovereignty, which are the foundations of a state of peace in relations between countries.

In this situation, not only peace in Ukraine but also security in Europe and maintenance of the rule of law and universal values on the continent depend, to a large extent, on the reaction of individual states, the entire Central and Eastern European region, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union.

Being passive about these facts is not a choice at all. Even today appeasement policy may lead to a catastrophe that once Europe went through 75 years ago.

Therefore, the participants in the “Europe of the Carpathians” conference gathered in Krynica on 3 September 2014 definitely condemn Russian aggression policy, which destabilises Eastern Europe, and call upon the Trans-Atlantic community states to react consistently and adequately to this threat, *inter alia*, by expanding defence capacity of the allied states in Central and Eastern Europe.

Today Ukraine is entitled to full support in any possible form it will request, whereas the joint Trans-Atlantic response to Russia should be strong enough to hold off its further aggression and to restore Ukraine’s territorial integrity, including Crimea.

We appeal to the individual states in our region to find the way to a joint reaction characterized by solidarity to the war on Ukraine. We express our solidarity with all victims of the Crimea’s occupation and the war on Ukraine, in particular with families of the fallen soldiers.

The position of the 3rd Forum of Carpathian Municipalities Rzeszów, 2 December 2016

We, the inhabitants of Polish Carpathians, assembled on 1–2 December 2016 in Rzeszów during the 3rd Forum of Carpathian Municipalities entitled *Joint management in Carpathian space*,

CONSCIOUS of the fact that the Carpathian region is a unique and dynamic living environment for many local communities and a place of unprecedented richness of nature, landscape and cultural heritage, as well as possessing a great ecologic and economic potential that is, however, currently undergoing violent environmental, social, demographic and economic changes;

OBSERVING with concern that the current model of development could lead to permanent changes of the aforementioned environment in the Carpathian region, as well as to a loss of its environment, landscape, and cultural features that constitute its development potential;

EXPRESSING a belief that conducting joint action could significantly contribute to a reduction in scale of current threats, and basing socio-economic development of the Carpathian region on a sustainable exploitation of its natural resources, as well as overcoming the development barriers apposite to the region in an innovative and coordinated manner;

ASSUMING that the provisions of the Framework convention on the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians (Reference of the Polish Journal of Laws: Dz.U. 2007 Nr 96 poz. 634, henceforth referred to as the Carpathian Convention) set the desired direction of actions to provide a sustainable level of socio-economic development and maintain a common natural and cultural legacy of the Carpathian region;

SHARING the conviction expressed through Recommendation 296 adopted on 29 October 2010 by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, stating that local and regional authorities are to play a significant role in the implementation of the Carpathian Convention;

INVOKING Art. 13(2) of the Carpathian Convention obliging its Parties to conduct their policies in such a way as to guarantee the participation of the society in the decision-making process pertaining to the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians and the implementation of the Convention;

ACCORDING to our tasks and competences arising from the Act of 8 March 1990 on Local Self-Government (Reference of the Polish Journal of Laws: Dz.U. 2016, poz. 446) as well as the Act of 5 June 1998 on District Self-Government (Reference of the Polish Journal of Laws: Dz.U. 2016, poz. 814);

Present our position:

A policy of sustainable growth of the Carpathian region

We share the position of the European Parliament expressed in the Resolution of 22 September 2010 regarding the European strategy for the economic and social development of mountain regions, islands and sparsely populated areas (2012/C 50 E/07) stating that regions suffering from serious and permanent unfavourable environmental or demographic conditions, such as cross-border or mountainous areas deserve separate regional development programmes; as well as that the provisions of Art. 174 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union should be reflected in specific strategies for development and in measures that are aimed at overcoming the challenges, structurally adapt these regions, tap into their potential and increase their competitiveness.

We express a demand for the Carpathian Convention to become the basis of the National Strategy for the Sustained Economic and Social Development of the Polish part of the Carpathian region, in particular through taking into account the provisions of the Convention and its Protocols as regarding individual sector-specific policies.

We express a demand that Marshals of the Małopolskie, Podkarpackie and Śląskie Voivodeships will consider the possibility of creating, together with the Ministry of Economic Development, a joint transregional strategy for sustainable growth of that region of Poland that the Carpathian Convention applies to; or that they will use their best efforts in order for the development strategies of the aforementioned voivodeships, in those parts referring to the subregions that the Carpathian Convention applies to in part or as a whole, to be coordinated and complementary, and at the same time taking into account the developmental and territorial specifics of each of the voivodeships.

Tourism

Convinced that a sustainable growth of tourism in the Carpathian region is an opportunity to boost the economic growth of the region and the affluence of its inhabitants, we express readiness to cooperate with the Minister of Sport and Tourism to implement the Protocol on sustainable development of tourism to the Framework convention on the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians (Reference of the Polish Journal of Laws: Dz.U. 2013, poz. 682), including the fulfilment of the commitment resulting from Art. 12(2) of the Protocol that obligates the signatories to perform actions to redirect and refocus part of the tourist flow outside of the currently popular tourist destinations and susceptible areas, such as protected areas, into areas

less ecologically endangered, less developed and less used by the tourism industry that have a sufficient potential allowing them to absorb and capture some part of the tourism flow. Apart from creating benefits for the natural environment, this would allow for a more balanced distribution of the benefits created by the growth of the tourism services sector, between all the municipalities of the Polish part of the Carpathians.

We express a demand that, according to Art. 11(3 and 4) of the Protocol, the Ministry of Sport and Tourism, together with the Marshals of the voivodeships, will shape a policy that supports and promotes the creation of initiatives and implementation of projects for the sustainable growth of tourism in the Carpathians; initiatives that are favourable toward the development of local economies, as well as founded in the local potential through a much wider use of local products and skills, and the possibility of hiring the local workforce, with the goal to mitigate the negative effects of migration and depopulation of rural areas of the Carpathian region.

Agriculture

We express a demand that, according to Art. 7 of the Carpathian Convention, the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development will shape the agricultural policy to include the need to protect the mountainous ecosystems and landscapes, as well as the specific conditions of the mountains as areas of less favourable management possibilities. In particular, this should be achieved by creating and implementing appropriate instruments, such as adaptation of special agricultural-environmental-climate packages to the specific features of the Carpathian region. These packages should be supporting traditional forms of agriculture, in particular the preservation and rebuilding of the extensive use of meadows and pastures.

We express a demand that while implementing the provisions of Art. 11 of the Carpathian Convention, together with the programme of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity along with Action Plan for the period 2015–2020 (Reference of the Official Gazette of the Republic of Poland: M.P. 2015, poz. 1207), the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development will consider the necessity of increasing the financial support for actions undertaken to conserve and rebuild the indigenous animal breeds and crop plant varieties, together with the protection of their genetic assets.

We are expressing great joy with the current progress made in the field of developing a draft of a Protocol on sustainable agriculture and rural development to the Framework Carpathian Convention, and we postulate that the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Poland adopts and signs this international agreement during the Fifth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (COP5) in 2017.

Recognising pastoralism as one of the most important foundations of a common Carpathian identity, an important factor of building and retaining social bonds in mountainous areas, as well as the conservation and rebuilding of biological and landscape diversity of the Carpathian region, we support the call made by the Extraordinary Congress of the Podhalian Union expressed on 28 November 2016 in Ludźmierz to the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. The Minister was called to *recognise pastoralism as a form of seasonal, communal herding of sheep and to grant the Pastoral Farm the status of a beneficiary of RDP subsidies [Rural Development Programme – PROW] or any other within the programme to rebuild sheep herding, with an opportunity for the seasonal location of a communal herd to receive an identification number*, stressing at the same time the necessity of introducing special provisions into the RDP that would refer to registering and financial support of producers' cooperatives which aim to rebuild the communal herding of sheep and livestock.

Spatial planning

We express a demand for the strategies for development and spatial development plans of the Polish part of the Carpathians to consider the provisions of the Carpathian Convention and its thematic Protocols which are considered binding for the Republic of Poland.

We stress the necessity of quickly undertaking specific measures to protect the landscape of the Carpathian region, at the same time expressing concern that the currently binding Spatial Planning and Development Act of 27 March 2003 (Reference of the Polish Journal of Laws: Dz.U. 2016, poz. 778) is insufficiently preventing the continued deterioration of the landscape, which in turn decreases the touristic attractiveness of the region and negatively impacts the competitiveness of the Polish part of the Carpathians vis-a-vis the mountainous areas and foothills of other Carpathian or Alpine states;

We emphasise the importance of *Joint management of the Carpathian space* trainings organised by the UNEP/GRID-Warszawa Centre under the *Carpathians Unite – Mechanism of Consultation and Cooperation for Implementation of the Carpathian Convention* project. They are conducted in order to execute Task 38 – Inclusion of green infrastructure into planning works at the local level, in order to achieve Goal D.II – *Implementation of green infrastructure concept as the tool which enables maintenance and strengthening of existing ecosystems and their services* of the programme of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity along with Action Plan for the period 2015–2020 (Reference of the Official Gazette of the Republic of Poland: M.P. 2015, poz. 1207).

We underline a pressing urge to implement legal solutions binding spatial design plans to include provisions that will:

- shape spatial order,
- retain the spatial structure of the landscape,
- protect the aesthetic values and their exposure,
- continue traditional spatial management by considering the features of regional architecture and cultural landscape,
- limit the dispersion of settlements and restore degraded areas.

We express a conviction that the appropriate tool to protect the aesthetic value of the landscape would be based on landscape reports created to study the conditions and directions of spatial planning, together with local spatial development plans. The scope and form of the landscape report would be governed by regulations of the minister in charge of infrastructure and construction.

Concerned with the quality of spatial development and its effect on conservation of the value of common Carpathian space, we encourage territorial self-government units of the Carpathian region to implement rules and recommendations established in the Code of Good Practice in Shaping the Carpathian Space created for the implementation of the *Carpathians Unite – Mechanism of Consultation and Cooperation for Implementation of the Carpathian Convention* project.

Conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity

We expect the Minister of Environment to approve the National Plan of Action to implement the Protocol about conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity, created within the framework of the *Carpathians Unite – Mechanism of Consultation and Cooperation for Implementation of the Carpathian Convention* project, and we expect the minister to consider the need to financially support the actions of local government units undertaken in order to implement the aforementioned National Action Plan.

Cultural heritage

Considering that the diversity and richness of cultural heritage of the Carpathian region, created throughout hundreds of years of presence of man in the mountains and as a result of interaction and cultural exchanges between the different ethnic groups inhabiting the region, as well as in deep interdependence with the environmental heritage, is a feature of the Carpathian region worthy of preservation and is unique on a European and global scale, as well as being of great importance for the development of sustainable tourism, we expect the ministry of Culture and National Heritage to enter cooperation with appropriate ministries of other Parties to the Convention in order to agree upon a new thematic Protocol to be added to the Carpathian Convention. This Protocol would concern the conservation and promotion of Carpathian cultural heritage.



The building of the Slovak Republic National Council, Bratislava

We maintain the declaration expressed during the 1st Forum of Carpathian Municipalities in 2013 of readiness to cooperate with local government units of other Parties to the Carpathian Convention in order to implement the provisions of the aforementioned Convention and in order to undertake joint actions throughout the whole Carpathian region.

We appeal to all the social environments acting for sustainable growth of the Carpathian region and the protection of environmental and cultural heritage assets to undertake joint actions to implement the provisions of the Carpathian Convention.

We express gratitude to the people of the Swiss Confederation for their engagement in the implementation process of the Carpathian Convention by supporting the *Carpathians Unite – Mechanism of Consultation and Cooperation for Implementation of the Carpathian Convention* project. This project serves to tighten the cooperation between the local communities of the Carpathians, similarly to how the provisions of the Alpine Convention envisage it for the Alps.

Przemyśl Declaration, 29 January 2017

Towards Responsible Development – the Basis for the EU Macro-Regional Strategy for the Carpathian Region

For many years now the Carpathian region has been an area of cooperation of sovereign nation states of Central and Eastern Europe at presidential, governmental, parliamentary and local-government levels. We have developed interstate and cross-border cooperation in the form of the “Europe of the Carpathians” initiative, with the Visegrad Group as its institutional basis. Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic jointly represent the interests of our region in the European Union in collaboration with the other Carpathian countries, cope with the challenges confronting Europe and seek to renew the Union, overcome the crisis and cope with the challenges confronting Europe. We advocate European Union’s return to its fundamental values, including Christianity, as the principles of subsidiarity and solidarity stem from these very values.

Recognising the uniqueness of the Carpathian region, whose potential stems from its cultural, economic and social diversity as well as recognising the will of cooperation between the states and societies, we believe that it is necessary for the European Union to adopt a macro-regional development strategy for the Carpathian Region. The Strategy for the Carpathian Region should play a special role as a mechanism of cooperation and joint projects. Thus, the Strategy will significantly reduce the peripheral character of our region, increase security and reinforce public support for the European Union.

European unity understood as cooperation of sovereign nation states should be based on a model of responsible development. In the coming years, the objective of the Carpathian cooperation is to develop the North-South axis, which is indispensable for increasing economic coherence in the region and improving its accessibility by transport services. In this context, the following investment projects are of strategic economic significance: Via Carpathia together with road S19, Podłęże–Piekietko railway line, Oder-Danube canal. We also support other regional responsible development initiatives, such as: INTERREG Central Europe transnational cooperation programme, Cross-border Cooperation Programme Poland–Belarus–Ukraine 2014–2020, cooperation in the area of youth exchange, the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians, the Carpathian Institute, the Beskids Skiing Centre. We will act in favour of propagating tourism which fosters intercultural communication and strong ties between local communities. Therefore, we consider it is essential to develop existing border crossings and to set up new ones. We advocate placing cross-border Austro-Hungarian forts, including the Przemyśl



The building of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Warsaw

fortress, on the UNESCO World Heritage list. In order to strengthen cooperation in the region, we advocate organising conferences of Carpathian parliamentary groups and of the Carpathian economic forum.

We believe that a macro-regional strategy for the Carpathian region based on responsible development will deliver expected social effects for economy, infrastructure, education, environment and culture. By increasing innovativeness and creating room for entrepreneurship, the Strategy will increase the competitiveness and efficiency of the Carpathian region economies. The Strategy will also contribute to the protection of multicultural heritage, diversity of natural environment and tourist assets in Central and Eastern Europe.

Politicians, scientists, experts involved in the initiative “Europe of the Carpathians” 2011–2019

- **Joan Aburdan**, Rector of the Transylvania University of Braşov
- **Andrzej Adamczyk**, Minister of Infrastructure of Poland
- **Aldo Amati**, Ambassador of the Italian Republic
- **Ben-Oni Ardelean**, Vice-President of the Chamber of Deputies, Romania
- **Zygmunt Berdychowski**, Chairman of the Economic Forum Programme Council
- **Włodzimierz Bernacki**, Chairman of the Polish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
- **Oleksandr Bokotey**, Director of the Institute of Ecological and Religious Studies at the Uzhhorod National University
- **László Borbély**, State Counsellor to the Prime Minister’s Office, Romanian Government
- **Bogdan Borusewicz**, Vice-Marshal of the Senate of the Republic of Poland
- **Rázsai Botond**, Deputy Mayor of Eger
- **Igor Cependa**, Rector of the Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University
- **Aymeric Chauprade**, Member of the European Parliament, France
- **Robert Choma**, former Mayor of Przemyśl (2002–2018)
- **Jacek Czaputowicz**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland
- **József Czukor**, Chief Foreign and Security Policy Adviser to the Prime Minister of Hungary
- **Gordana Čomić**, Vice-President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia
- **Mykhailo Dovbenko**, former Deputy to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine
- **Ewa Draus**, Vice-Marshal of Podkarpackie Voivodeship
- **David Engels**, historian, philosopher and analyst at the Institute for Western Affairs
- **Árpád Érsek**, Minister of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic
- **Lucjan Fac**, military historian, lecturer at the East European State University in Przemyśl

- **Jan Farský**, Member of Parliament, Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic
- **Angelo Farrugia**, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malta
- **Martin Fedor**, Chairman of the Slovak-Polish Parliamentary Friendship Group, National Council of the Slovak Republic
- **Ján Ferencák**, Mayor of Kežmarok, Member of the European Committee of the Regions
- **Martin Fronc**, former Minister of Education, Higher Education and Science, former MP of the National Council of the Slovak Republic
- **Jan Golba**, Mayor of Muszyna
- **Małgorzata Gosiewska**, Vice-Marshall of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland
- **Jean-Pierre Halkin**, Head of Unit Macro-regions, Transnational/ Interregional Cooperation, IPA, Enlargement at the DG REGIO, European Commission
- **Adam Hamryszczak**, former Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Investment and Development
- **Oleksandr Hanushchyn**, Chairman of Lviv Regional Council
- **Richárd Hörcsik**, Chairman of the Committee on European Affairs of the Hungarian National Assembly
- **Bohdan Hud’**, Head of the Department of European Integration at the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv
- **Ján Hudacký**, Chairman of the Regional Advisory and Information Centre Prešov, former deputy to the National Council of the Republic of Slovakia
- **Emilia Janeczko**, Warsaw University of Life Sciences
- **Mariusz Orion Jędrysek**, former Secretary of State (2015–2019), Ministry of Environment
- **Erika Jurinová**, Deputy to the National Council of the Slovak Republic, former Vice-President of the National Council of the Slovak Republic (2012–2016), President of the Žylina self-governing region
- **Stanisław Karczewski**, Marshal of the Senate of the Republic of Poland
- **Lajos Kepli**, Vice-Chairman of the Committee on Sustainable Development of the National Assembly of Hungary
- **Mykhaylo Khariy**, Coordinator of the National Forum Transformation of Ukraine

- Csaba György Kiss, University of Warsaw, Hungary
- Izabela Kloc, Deputy to the European Parliament
- Mykola Kniazhytski, Chairman of the Committee of Culture and Spirituality, Co-Chairman of the Ukrainian-Polish Parliamentary Group at the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine
- Zofia Kochan, Director of the Department of Agriculture, Geodesy and Property Management, Office of Marshal of the Podkarpackie Voivodeship
- Zdzisław Krasnodębski, former Vice-President of the European Parliament
- Dušan Krištofik, former Ambassador of the Slovak Republic in Poland
- Zbigniew Krysiak, Director of the Board of Chairman of Institute of Schuman's Thought, Poland
- Miro Kovač, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Croatian Parliament
- Andrius Kubilius, Vice-President of the Committee on European Affairs, Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania
- Piotr Kohut, author of the "Redyk Karpacki" (Trailing of the sheep in Carpathians) project, "Pasterstwo Transhumancyjne" (Transhumance) Foundation
- Tomasz Koziński, Director of the Central Sports Centre
- Adrienne Körmendy, Consul General of Hungary in Krakow
- Marek Kuchciński, Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland
- Andrij Kulchynski, Mayor of Truskavets
- Jerzy Kwieciński, Minister of Investments and Economic Development of Poland
- János Latorcai, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Hungary
- Dawid Lasek, Vice-President of the Board of the Association of the Carpathian Euroregion, Poland
- Jan Lata, Rector of the University in Ostrava, Czech Republic
- Urszula Litwin, Agricultural University of Krakow
- Gerwazy Longher, Deputy to the Chamber of Deputies of Romania
- Pavol Mačala, Scientific Association – Personalizm, Slovakia

- **Peter Madigár**, Local Action Group Terchovská Dolina (Slovakia)
- **Jan Malicki**, Director of the Centre for East European Studies of the University of Warsaw
- **Marta Malska**, Head of the Tourism Department of the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv
- **Markijan Malski**, Dean of the Faculty of International Relations, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Ukraine
- **Stanisław Małek**, Faculty of Forestry, University of Agriculture in Krakow
- **Vladimir Marinković**, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia
- **Rokas Masiulis**, Minister of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Lithuania
- **Anatolij Matwijenko**, former Deputy to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine
- **Artur Michalski**, Deputy Director of the Board of National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management, Poland
- **Ján Mičovský**, former Member of the Parliament of the Slovak Republic
- **Lőrinc Nacsa**, Deputy of the National Assembly of Hungary
- **András Náhlik**, Vice-Rector of the University of Sopron, Hungary
- **Piotr Naimski**, Secretary of State in the Chancellery of Prime Minister, Government's Plenipotentiary for Strategic Energy Infrastructure
- **Micaela Navarro Garzón**, Vice-President of the Congress of Deputies, Spain
- **Zoltán Németh**, Deputy of the National Assembly of Hungary
- **Andrija Nikolić**, Chairman of the Committee on International Relations and Emigrants, Parliament of Montenegro
- **Yavor Notev**, Vice-President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria
- **Volodymyr Omelyan**, Minister of Infrastructure of Ukraine
- **Władysław Ortyl**, Marshal of Podkarpackie Voivodeship
- **Sándor Óze**, Dean of the History Faculty of the Catholic University in Budapest
- **Waldemar Paruch**, Head of the Strategic Analysis Centre, Chancellery of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland

- **Katarzyna Pawlikowska**, Deputy Director, Department of Direct Payments, Ministry of Agriculture
- **Octav-Dan Paxino**, Secretary of State, Ministry of European Funds of Romania
- **Vasyl Pavluk**, Consul General of Ukraine in Lublin
- **Jerzy Petrdlik**, conductor cooperating with Charles University in Prague
- **Viliam Pichler**, Dean of the Faculty of Forestry, Technical University in Zvolen, Slovakia
- **Ivan Piiyak**, Mayor of Skhidnytsia
- **Piotr Pilch**, Vice-Marshal of Podkarpackie Voivodeship
- **Jerzy Polaczek**, Deputy, Sejm of the Republic of Poland, President of the Polish-Slovak Parliamentary Group
- **Josef Polačko**, Chair of the Board of the Association of Carpathian Euroregion Slovakia – North
- **Călin Popescu-Târceanu**, President of the Senate, Romania
- **Tomasz Poręba**, Deputy to the European Parliament
- **Bohdan Prots**, the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine
- **Stefan Purici**, Vice Rector of the Ștefan cel Mare University of Suceava
- **Jacek Sagan**, Director of the Forestry Department, Ministry of the Environment
- **Jan Sechter**, EU & Foreign Policy Advisor to the Speaker of Chamber of Deputies, Czech Republic
- **Attila Sikora**, Deputy Mayor of Sárospatak
- **Wojciech Skurkiewicz**, Secretary of State, Ministry of National Defence
- **Michal Slašťan**, Deputy Mayor of Ružomberok
- **Mirosław Sobolewski**, the Sejm Bureau of Research
- **Přemysl Sobotka**, President of the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic
- **Sławomir Solecki**, Vice-Rector of the East European State University in Przemyśl
- **Bogusław Sonik**, former Deputy to the European Parliament
- **Jarosław Stawiarski**, Marshal of Lubelskie Voivodeship
- **Marian Suplata**, University of Matej Bela in Banska Bystrica

- **Abp Zbigniew Stankiewicz**, Metropolitan Archbishop of Riga, Latvia
- **Tomasz Szatkowski**, Undersecretary of State, Ministry of National Defense of the Republic of Poland
- **Krzysztof Szczerski**, Secretary of State in the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland
- **Mykola Shershun**, former Deputy to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine
- **Péter Szijjártó**, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary
- **Maciej Szymanowski**, Director of Waclaw Felczak Institute in Warsaw
- **Jan Szyszko**, former Minister of Environment
- **Ladislav Šuhányi**, Vice-Rector of the University of Prešov, Slovakia
- **Ognjen Tadić**, Vice-President of the House of Nations of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **Ryszard Terlecki**, Vice-Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland
- **Ignat Timar**, President of the Polish-Romanian Society in Krakow
- **Renáta Tomášková**, Vice-Rector of the University of Ostrava
- **Aleksander Tomský**, Managing Director of Leda Publishers s.r.o, Czech Republic
- **Rev. Franjo Topić**, President of Croatian Cultural Society "Napredak", Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **Paweł Trefler**, Rector of the East European State Higher School in Przemyśl
- **Dan Ťok**, former Minister of Transport of the Czech Republic
- **László E. Varga**, Hungarian historian, graduate of the Jagiellonian University, retired researcher at the University of the Reformed Church in Budapest
- **Mihály Varga**, Minister of Finance of Hungary
- **Magda Vášáryová**, former Deputy to the National Council of the Slovak Republic (2006–2016), Ambassador of the Slovak Republic in Poland (2000–2005)
- **Valik Voloshyn**, European Wilderness Society, Regional Development Agency of the Transcarpathian Region
- **Marta Wierzbieniec**, Director of the Podkarpackie Philharmonic
- **Alicja Wosik-Majewska**, Head of Rzeszów Regional Branch of Cross-Border Cooperation Programme POLAND-BELARUS-UKRAINE

- **Mihailo Vyshyvaniuk**, former Chairman of the Ivano-Frankivsk Regional Public Administration (1997–2005, 2010–2013)
- **Oksana Yurynets**, former Deputy to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine
- **Janusz Zaleski**, former Undersecretary of State in the Ministry of Environment (2007–2014)
- **Dorota Zielińska**, Deputy President of the Board of the Association for Development and Promotion of Podkarpacie “Pro Carpathia”
- **Matyáš Zrno**, Program Director of Civic Institute, Czech Republic
- **Denisa Žiláková**, General Director of Central Coordinating Body at the Office of Deputy Prime Minister for Investment and Informatization of the Slovak Republic

Persons in the photographs

- p. 11: From left to right: Marek Kuchciński – Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Jaroslav Narkevič – Deputy Speaker of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, Piotr Babinetz – Deputy to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Ghervazen Longher – Deputy to the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of Romania, Pavol Mačala – Member of the Board of the Scientific Association Personalism from Slovakia, Jacek Kurski – Chair of TVP (Polish Television)
- p. 15: From left to right: Stanisław Karczewski – Marshal of the Senate of the Republic of Poland, János Latorcai – Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Hungary, Andrej Danko – Speaker of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, Marek Kuchciński – Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Jan Hamáček – Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, Přemysl Sobotka – Deputy Speaker of the Senate of the Czech Republic
- p. 20: From left to right: Vyacheslav Nehoda – First Deputy of the Minister of Regional Development, Construction and Housing of Ukraine, Ryszard Terlecki – Deputy Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Kseniya Lyapina – Head of the State Regulatory Service of Ukraine
- p. 23: First row from left to right: Călin Popescu-Tăriceanu – President of the Senate of Romania, Andrian Candu – Speaker of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Irakli Kobakhidze – Chair of the Parliament of Georgia, Šefik Džaferović – Speaker of the House of Representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Marek Kuchciński – Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Stanisław Karczewski – Marshal of the Senate of the Republic of Poland, Bariša Čolak – Speaker of the House of Peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina, László Kövér – Speaker of the National Assembly of Hungary, Ivan Brajović – President of the Parliament of Montenegro
- Second row from left to right: Tsveta Karayancheva – Vice-President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria, Valentina Leskaj – Vice-Speaker of the Parliament of Albania, Ryszard Terlecki – Deputy Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Ziyafat Asgarov – First Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Željko Reiner – Deputy Speaker of the Croatian Parliament

Third row from left to right: Tufan Köse – Quaestor / Member of the Bureau of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, Djordje Milicević – Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, Oksana Yurynets – Deputy to the Supreme Council of Ukraine, Gundars Daudze – Deputy Speaker of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, Chrysoula Katsavria-Siopoulou – President of the Greek-Polish Parliamentary Friendship Group of the Hellenic Parliament (in the back), Gediminas Kirkilas – Deputy Speaker of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, Andrej Hrnčiar – Deputy Speaker of the National Council of the Slovak Republic

Fourth row from left to right: Harri Tiido (observer status) – Ambassador of the Republic of Estonia to the Republic of Poland, Aleksandr Averyanov – Ambassador of the Republic of Belarus to the Republic of Poland, Georgian Pop – Deputy, Secretary of the Standing Bureau of the Chamber of Deputies of Romania, Edgar Ghazaryan – Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia to the Republic of Poland, Jakub Karfík (observer status) – Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the Republic of Poland, Gorica Atanasova-Gjorevska (observer status) – Charge d’Affaires a.i., Embassy of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in the Republic of Poland

p. 27: From left to right: Waldemar Paruch – Adviser to the Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, István Íjgyártó – Minister of State for Cultural and Science Diplomacy of Hungary, Włodzimierz Bernacki – Head of the Parliamentary Delegation of the Republic of Poland to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Ludovít Černák – Chair of the Board of Directors of Sitno Holding, former Minister of Economy of the Slovak Republic, Karel Schwarzenberg – Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, František Mikš – Director of the Centre for the Study of Democracy and Culture in Brno

p. 34: From left to right: Jerzy Kwieciński – expert in the area of regional development and EU funds, Business Centre Club, Tomasz Poręba – Member of the European Parliament, Rostislav Hošek – expert at the Tourism Department of the Ministry of Regional Development of the Czech Republic, Richard Hörcsik – Chair of the Committee on EU Affairs of the National Assembly of Hungary, Marek Kuchciński – Deputy Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Luboš Mártinák – Deputy to the National Council of the Slovak Republic, Marcell Niezgoda – Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Regional Development, Martín Guillermo Ramírez – Secretary General

of the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR), Dawid Lasek – Vice-President of the Association of the Carpathian Euroregion

p. 36: From left to right: Grzegorz Łubczyk – former Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to Hungary, Jerzy Snopek – Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to Hungary, László Kövér – Speaker of the National Assembly of Hungary, Marek Kuchciński – Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Kornel Morawiecki – Deputy to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland

p. 38: From left to right: Polish delegation: Jan Malicki, Director, Centre of East European Studies, University of Warsaw, Włodzimierz Bernacki – Head of the Parliamentary Delegation of the Republic of Poland to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Ryszard Terlecki – Deputy Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Izabela Kloc – Chair of the European Union Affairs Committee of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Marek Kuchciński – Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Bogdan Rzońca – Deputy to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Stanisław Karczewski – Marshal of the Senate of the Republic of Poland, Jan Majchrowski – Adviser to the Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Leszek Kieniewicz – Director of the Office for International and European Union Affairs

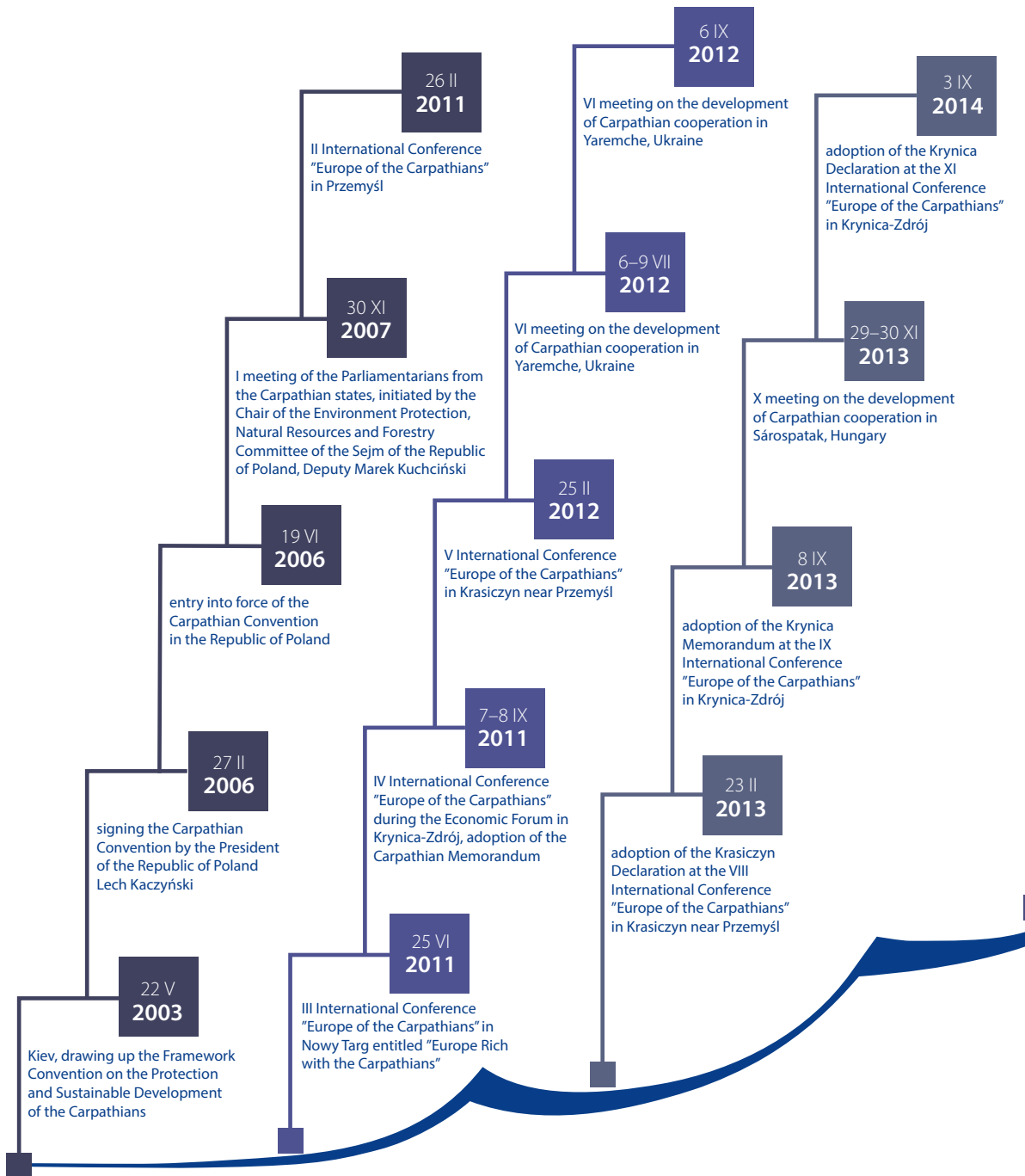
p. 69: First row from left to right: Călin Popescu-Tăriceanu – President of the Senate of Romania, Ivan Brajović – President of the Parliament of Montenegro, Irakli Kobakhidze – President of the Parliament of Georgia, Šefik Džaferović – Speaker of the House of Representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Marek Kuchciński – Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Andrzej Duda – President of the Republic of Poland, Stanisław Karczewski – Marshal of the Senate of the Republic of Poland, Bariša Čolak – Speaker of the House of Peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina, László Kövér – Speaker of the National Assembly of Hungary, Andrian Candu – President of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Andriy Parubiy – Chair of the Supreme Council of Ukraine

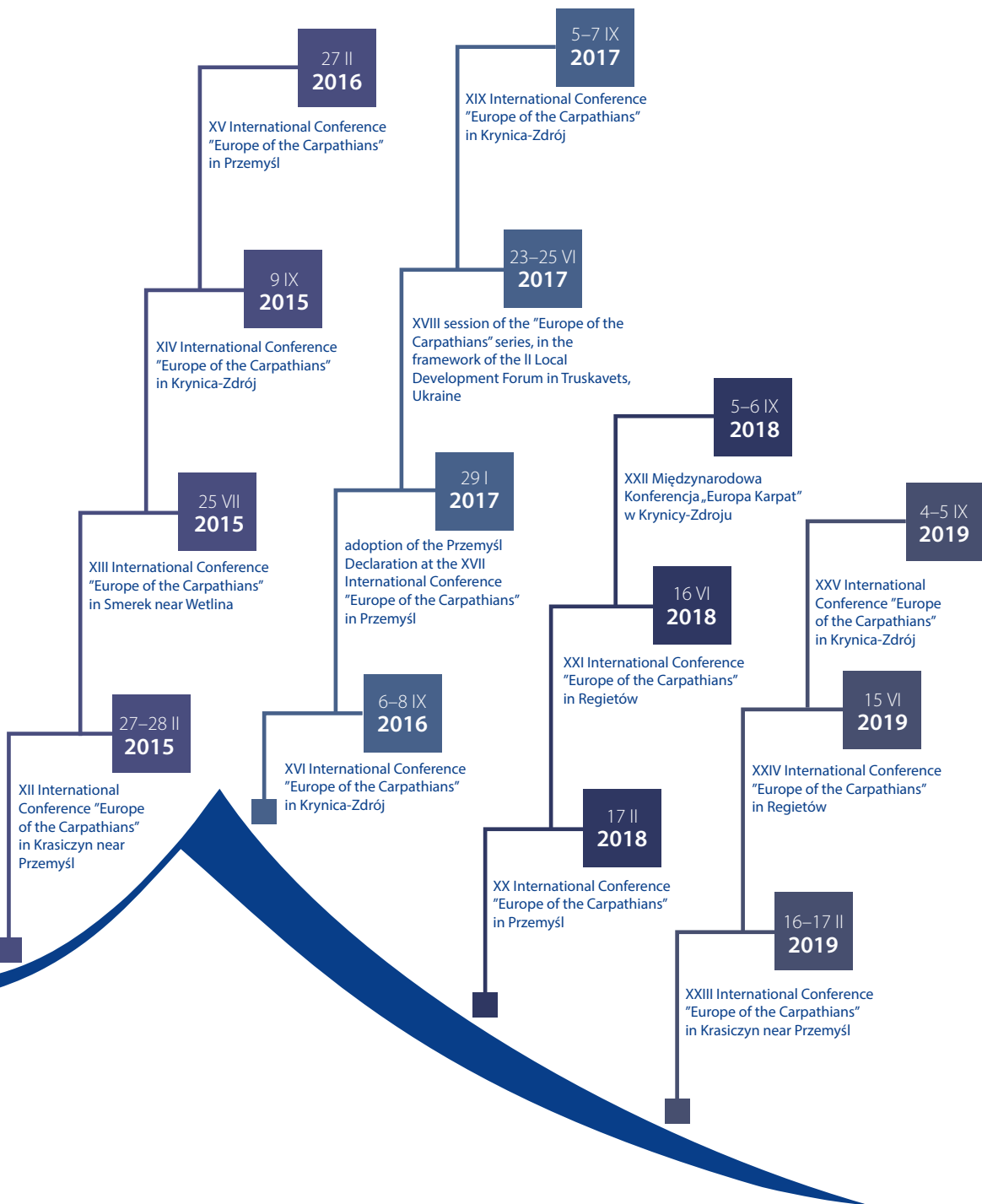
Second row from left to right: Harri Tiido (observer status) – Ambassador of the Republic of Estonia to the Republic of Poland, Aleksandr Averyanov – Ambassador of the Republic of Belarus to the Republic of Poland, Edgar Ghazaryan – Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia to the Republic of Poland, Georgian Pop – Deputy, Secretary of the Standing Bureau of the Chamber of Deputies of Romania, Andrej Hrnčiar – Deputy Speaker of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, Gediminas Kirkilas – Deputy Speaker of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, Jakub Karfík (observer sta-

tus) – Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the Republic of Poland (back row), Željko Reiner – Deputy Speaker of the Croatian Parliament, Ziyafat Asgarov – First Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Adam Bielan – Deputy Marshal of the Senate of the Republic of Poland, Ryszard Terlecki – Deputy Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Valentina Leskaj – Vice-Speaker of the Parliament of Albania, Tsveta Karayancheva – Vice-President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria, Gundars Daudze – Deputy Speaker of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, Chrysoula Katsavria-Sioropoulou – President of the Greek-Polish Parliamentary Friendship Group of the Hellenic Parliament, Djordje Milicević – Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, Tufan Köse – Quaestor / Member of the Bureau of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, Gorica Atanasova-Gjorevska (observer status) – Charge d’Affaires a.i., Embassy of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in the Republic of Poland

- p. 74: From right to left: Oksana Yurynets – Deputy to the Supreme Council of Ukraine, Paweł Kukiz – Chair of the Parliamentary Group Kukiz’15, Richard Hörcsik – Chair of the Committee on EU Affairs, the National Assembly of Hungary, Ján Hudacký – Chair of the Economic Committee of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, Přemysl Sobotka – Deputy Speaker of the Senate of the Czech Republic
- p. 83: From left to right: Hermine Naghdalyan – Vice-President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia, Valeh Alaskerov – Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Viktor Guminsky – Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Belarus, Mladen Bosić – Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Trajko Veljanovski – President of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, Stanisław Karczewski – Marshal of the Senate of the Republic of Poland, Marek Kuchciński – Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, David Usupashvili – Speaker of the Parliament of Georgia, Liliana Palihovici – Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Darko Pajović – President of the Parliament of Montenegro, Maja Gojković – President of the Parliament of Serbia, Ismail Kahraman – Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of the Republic of Turkey, Andriy Parubiy – Chair of the Supreme Council of Ukraine

Calendar of "Europe of the Carpathians"





Biographical notes

Richárd Hörcsik – university professor, historian and minister of the Evangelical Reformed Church. The founder and the first Chair of the European Affairs Committee of the Hungarian National Assembly (1992–1994). Since 1998, individual representative of the Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén commune. Member of Fidesz. Former mayor of the town of Sárospatak. Since 2010, Chair of the European Union Affairs Committee of the Hungarian National Assembly.

Ján Hudacký – Chairman of the Institute of the Christian-Social Policy, Chairman of the Regional Advisory and Information Centre Prešov, former deputy to the National Council of the Republic of Slovakia

Jerzy Kwieciński – Minister of Investments and Economic Development of Poland. In 2015–2018 Secretary of State in the Ministry of Economic Development. In 2005–2008, he was Deputy Minister of Regional Development. President of the Management Board of the European Centre for Enterprise Foundation and the Deputy President of the Management Board of the European Centre for Enterprise (a limited liability company). He was an expert of the Business Centre Club in the area of regional development and structural funds. He has also provided consulting assistance with respect to the World Bank reports. Jerzy Kwieciński has worked as a university teacher and a researcher at the Faculty of Materials Science at the Warsaw University of Technology, and has carried out research and development projects in the area of industry. In 1993–2004, he worked in the European Commission Representation in Poland. He is the Chair of the Convention of the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin. In 2015, he became a member of the National Development Council appointed by the President of the Republic of Poland.

Pavol Mačala – Scientific Association – Personalizm, Slovakia, specialises in personalism of Slavs and the most ancient history of Slavs, former Head of the Department of History at the Faculty of Philosophy of the Catholic University in Ružomberok, Director of the Slovak Institute of History MS in Martin, in 1998–2002 advisor to the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Slovakia.

Jan Malicki – director of the Centre for East European Studies, author of the first programme “Eastern Studies” conducted at the Centre (since 1998), coordinator of government and university scholarship programmes for the East, director of the

Konstanty Kalinowski Scholarship Programme of the Government of the Republic of Poland (since 2006), permanent vice-president of the “Consortium of Ukrainian Universities and the University of Warsaw”.

Markiyany Malskyi – university professor, former ambassador of Ukraine to Poland, Dean of the International Relations Faculty of the Ivan Franko National University in Lviv.

Waldemar Paruch – university professor specialising in social sciences, political scientist, historian, researcher at the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin; author of about 190 scientific publications, specialises in methodology of research in political sciences, foreign policy, Central Europe; Head of the Strategic Analysis Centre, Chancellery of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland

Krzysztof Szczerski – university professor, chief of the Cabinet of the President of the Republic of Poland, expert in the field of foreign policy, European integration and public administration, Member of Sejm in 2011–2015. He served as a Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of State in the Office of the Committee for European Integration in 2007–2008.

Jarosław Szymanek – Ph.D., political scientist, expert in systems of government. Staff member of the Bureau of Research of the Chancellery of the Sejm.

Jan Szyszko – professor of forestry sciences, in the period 2015–2018 Minister of Environment in the governments of Beata Szydło and Mateusz Morawiecki, Deputy to the Sejm during the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th terms.

Ryszard Terlecki – Deputy Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, chair of the Law and Justice Parliamentary Club. Deputy to the 6th and 7th term Sejm. University professor, historian, columnist, lecturer at the Ignatianum Academy, former director of the Krakow Branch of the Institute of National Remembrance.

Oksana Yurynets – former deputy to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Petro Poroshenko Bloc, Chair of the Sub-Committee on Regional and Cross-border Cooperation of Ukraine with the EU Member States, Co-Chair of the Group for Relations with Poland of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

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