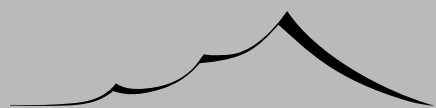




EUROPE

OF THE CARPATHIANS CLUBS



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“Europe of the Carpathians” – Europe of the Carpathians Clubs Steps¹

I. The „Europe of the Carpathians”

The „Europe of the Carpathians” initiative was launched at the end of the 20th century in the form of the „Green Carpathians” project. The aim of the project was to develop Polish-Slovak-Ukrainian cooperation in the field of **sustainable regional development** of Central and Eastern Europe and to maintain a **balance between economy and ecology** in this area. **The shortage of drinking water** and huge annual **flood damage** in mountain and foothill areas, occurring in the Carpathian countries, which are still a problem today, have also become a huge challenge.

In 2003, the so-called Carpathian Convention was launched in Kyiv, supporting environmental protection through **sustainable development**, which helped to disseminate the thesis that the Carpathian Mountains are a unique area in Europe, requiring international cooperation, especially in the face of challenges that individual states cannot address.

The point of the „Europe of the Carpathians” initiative was also to help overcome the effects of communism and support Central European countries on their way to the European Union.

1 Based on the text by prof. dr hab. Waldemar Paruch, „Europa Karpat”, Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, Warszawa 2016.



Prof. Waldemar Paruch during the panel "Achievements and deficits of democracy: the experience of 25 years of Central and Eastern Europe", "Europe of the Carpathians" conference, Krynica-Zdrój, September 8, 2016

II. Institutionalisation of the "Europe of the Carpathians"

In 2007–2011, the institutionalisation of the „Europe of the Carpathians” initiative took the form of **cyclical conferences** of the international community of people active in public life, who extended their Carpathian cooperation to macroregional cooperation. We are **a group of countries distinguished by their geopolitical location, Central European political identity, and national values shaped since the Middle Ages in the area between Germany and Russia.**

This institutionalisation also meant a **shift in focusing more attention on our closest neighbours.** Various cultural, religious, and ethnic influences have always intermingled in this area. And it was they who made the unique character of Central and Eastern Europe, its richness and diversity.



Jan Malicki and Igor Cependa, "Europe of the Carpathians" conference, Karpacz, September 8, 2021

In line with this line of thinking, we proclaimed the thesis that **the Carpathians unite, and do not divide**, the inhabitants of the region. They encourage cooperation not only between the communities living in these mountains, but also between the Carpathian states because **states are still the best institutions that ensure the safety of their citizens**.

Since 2011, the main organiser of the conference has been the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, creating the foundations for interparliamentary cooperation of the Carpathian states and facilitating an intellectual and expert debate on Central and Eastern Europe.

Cyclical international conferences in Krynica-Zdrój and Krasieczyn have become in 2011–2016 a **„Carpathian Agora”**, as well as an instrument in parliamentary diplomacy. They were meeting places for politicians from Central and Eastern Europe,



Marián Šuplata, Comenius University in Bratislava, "Europe of the Carpathians" conference, Krynica-Zdrój, September 5, 2019

intellectuals, state and local government activists, representatives of non-governmental organisations, and experts in various fields.

The thematic scope of the Carpathian conferences was systematically expanding. Until 2012, issues of cross-border and international cooperation were dominant

Since 2013, we have been formulating **more specific proposals – the Carpathian Strategy and the construction of the trans-European communication route „Via Carpathia”**.

Our goals were:

- strengthening political cooperation, including parliamentary cooperation, of the Carpathian states;
- strengthening political and economic ties;
- presenting the Carpathian point of view on many strategic problems of Europe.



Ștefan Purci, Vice-Rector for International Relations, Ștefan cel Mare University of Suceava

The means were to be parliamentary Carpathian groups, the Interparliamentary Assembly of Central and Eastern Europe, intellectual and scientific initiatives such as the organisation of the Carpathian University, or the development of the „Carpathian Encyclopedia”.

When in 2014, the Krynica Declaration supported Ukraine in the war with Russia, we understood that **a new direction was also being set – increasing security in the region.**

The „Europe of the Carpathians” initiative gradually expanded the scope of its impact and influenced the increasing involvement of both Carpathian entrepreneurs and intellectuals, as well as politicians from the Baltic and Caucasian states. It was becoming more and more a broad political project of organising cooperation between the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. In this way, it prepared the ground for other initiatives, such as the Three Seas Initiative.



Mykhaylo Khariy, Center for the Transformation of Ukraine

III. „Europe of the Carpathians“ – the centre of Central and Eastern Europe

We also took up the topic of the future of the countries in our region, which since 1989 have been rebuilding their own identity, creating together the extraordinary phenomenon of the diversity of Central and Eastern Europe.

The Carpathians are of **a typically cross-border nature, important in terms of communication**, and also play a unique **strategic role**. They are the core of Central and Eastern Europe, located in its centre.

Today, **our countries face important challenges**: from the east, the threat of Russian imperialism, from the south, an influx of immigrants, dilemmas related to the enlargement of the European Union and NATO, the crisis of European institutions, the rise of Euroscepticism and the awareness of the expansion of the German economy breaking the principle of balanced and harmonious development.



Jerzy Kwieciński, former Minister of Infrastructure and Development, former Minister of Finance, Vice-President of the Management Board of Bank Pekao SA

Cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe is a necessary condition for the protection of the political identity of the region, the realisation of national interests, and the strengthening of the subjectivity of sovereign states.

In Central and Eastern Europe, there are **30 countries** located between Germany and Russia along the North-South axis. They have **in common**:

- 1) **a sense of being a borderland** in the political and cultural dimension in relation to the West;
- 2) **the memory of the loss of subjectivity** and sovereignty to superpowers;
- 3) a strong presence in the public life of such categories as **freedom, independence, nation**;
- 4) **the perception of nations as ethnic and cultural communities**;
- 5) an independent reception and modernisation of political and philosophical trends emerging in Western Europe;
- 6) the changeability of state entities and the boundaries between them;
- 7) **an incomplete use of their potential**.

Over 150 million people live in Central and Eastern Europe. They form the majority group in the European Union, whose members (16 out of 28) in 2014 generated a gross national product with a total value of over USD 5 trillion, which accounted for approx. 27% of the GDP of the entire European Union.

The „Europe of the Carpathians” initiative is one of the levels of regional cooperation, which should be harmoniously connected with other projects inspired by the idea of the Intermarium or ABC region (Adriatic, Baltic, Black seas). The strength of the Europe of the Carpathians project is based on specific interests, transit routes, social needs, environmental cohesion, and the ability to cooperate.

The Carpathians today do not mark the border and do not divide Central and Eastern Europe, but are **a factor in building a community**. The implementation of the „Europe of the Carpathians” initiative ceases to define the Carpathians only in the geographical sense and gives them social, political, cultural, and economic significance.

The next stage of institutionalisation of the „Europe of the Carpathians” is the creation of a network of discussion clubs gathering people interested in cooperation in the region.



International Carpathians Europa Clubs

Declaration

aware of the responsibilities and moral obligations towards the countries and the nations of our region – Europe – in the context of the current and the approaching challenges,

- remembering the Christian roots of Europe, respecting values such as: family, democracy, human dignity, unlimited and legally protected freedom of opinions and speech, and the meaning of social and international dialogue,
- expressing our gratitude to the initiators, organisers and persons who have participated in the “Europe of the Carpathians” project for numerous years,

we express our belief about the need to continue and intensify the cooperation within the area of the countries and nations of the Europe of the Carpathians and the will to cooperate in favour of the free, democratic, safe, strong and just Central Europe.

For this purpose, we the undersigned, as the so-called initiation group, declare what follows:

- we establish the International Carpathian Europa Clubs (ICEC) which shall serve the objective diagnosis of the issues, defining the needs and their optimum implementation in accordance with the *vincere – vincere ad omnes* principle;



Founding meeting of the Association of the "Europe of the Carpathians Clubs", Warsaw, April 5, 2022

- we shall formulate the contents of the statute of the ICEC in the spirit of openness to cooperation with persons and institutions which identify themselves with the idea of Europe of the Carpathians – establishing a network of contacts, a capital of knowledge and the potential of mutual measures;
- we shall establish effective mechanisms of adapting the ICEC initiatives to the public life of the countries, nations and groups involved in the idea of Europe of the Carpathians in the name of the current and timeless benefits gained through good cooperation.

Krasiczyn, 5 February 2022



Mission of the Europe of the Carpathians Clubs

Europe of the 21st century – a time of the triumph of democracy and a free-market economy. It is in the meantime a period of a growing role of social engineering, of constraining of individual freedoms, in which both state and supranational forms of activity become less and less understandable for the citizen. Culture and economy broadly understood seem to be increasingly distant from human experiences and language.

In this world, the countries and peoples of Europe of the Carpathians are distinguished by their positive attitude towards Christian values and natural law, their attachment to the inherent dignity of man, principles of democracy, freedom to express views and opinions, and the importance of international dialogue in a spirit of partnership. We are characterised by the belief that it is precisely in the conditions of globalisation and international competition that more opportunities and opportunities await those who base their activities on national cultures and communities. It is those unmeasurable but powerful sources comparable to mountains that constitute a key motivating factor for action and going further, one step higher.

From a conceptual point of view, the word “club” is associated with a place where hunger and thirst can be quenched; a meeting point; a confraternity of people looking in the same direction, but not necessarily sharing the same views. A club is also a place for exchanging arguments and discussions leading to a common position or helping to identify existing divergences in order to build a way to reconcile differences of interests.

Nevertheless, it is important that real discussion clubs are governed by rules known from the most ancient times, such as the *petitio principii* – do not take as a premise what is yet to be proven, or the *ad populum* – do not claim that since a thesis is universally accepted it must be true. “Above all, one needs to know what he is talking about, or the whole discussion serves no purpose” Plato had already noted – and this is yet another

principle of the “Europe of the Carpathians” conferences which have now been organised for two decades, and whose creative development led to the establishment of the Europe of the Carpathians Club.

If the claim that Western culture has a chance of surviving in today’s world under the condition of putting its arrogance aside (by gaining self-confidence in the meantime), the Europe of the Carpathians Club has been created to play the role of the salt of the earth and the dust of wisdom on the Vistula, Vltava, Dnieper, Danube and, in every place where people in touch with these landscapes, nature, and culture, the beauty of which is difficult to describe in words happen to live.

International Europe of the Carpathians Clubs

On February 4, 2022, the meeting initiating the activity of the International Europe of the Carpathians Clubs took place.

The most important postulates of the IECC are:

- a proposal to organise conferences in Lviv, Mikulichyn, Yaremche, Budapest, Tokaj, Suceava, Presov;
- the preparation of an anthology of the literature of the Carpathians, the publication of a Europe of the Carpathians atlas;
- the presentation of an exhibition on the biodiversity of the Carpathians at the UN headquarters in New York;
- the organisation of the Carpathian Business Forum, where clubs could be used to exchange experiences regarding support for the sector of small and medium-sized enterprises in the Carpathian countries;
- a proposal for the functioning of the Club as a secretariat that informs members about important events, plans, and activities;
- the development of a joint index of scientific journals and the creation of a library for this part of Europe.

Attention was drawn to the unique cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity of the region, and at the same time, its great economic results in recent years. The need for intensifying cooperation within the “Europe of the Carpathians” in times of extreme geopolitical instability has also been underlined. The common cultural heritage was pointed out, with the simultaneous lack of mutual knowledge between neighbouring



Alexandra Ochmańska, President of the Association of the Europe of the Carpathians Clubs

cultures. The information that the countries of Central and Eastern Europe receive usually comes from the West or from Russia.

Four areas that should be dealt with in international cooperation have been identified: culture, economy, politics, and nature (biodiversity). Each of these areas should be considered on various levels: mutual, European, and global. In this context, it was proposed to consider the organisation of industry conferences, the fruit of which could be publications or magazines with a focus on tourism. The economic aspect of regional cooperation was underlined. The latter could lead to the implementation of business clubs – serving the exchange of experiences regarding support for the sector of small and medium-sized enterprises in the Carpathian countries. It was suggested to organise the “Europe of the Carpathians” conference in various cities in Poland, but also abroad. It was indicated that the Europe of the Carpathians Club could serve as a reflection on what other activities should be undertaken to raise the standard of living in the region, not forgetting the concern for cultural and natural heritage. It was emphasised that the creation of clubs should take not only the Carpathian perspective



Marek Kuchciński, Program Council's President of the Europe of the Carpathians Clubs

into account, but that the latter should ultimately be wider, covering the whole of Central and Eastern Europe.

In order to formalise the “Europe of the Carpathians” cooperation, the International Europe of the Carpathians Club has been proposed. The founding meeting took place on April 5, 2022, during which resolutions have unanimously adopted the Regulations of the “Europe of the Carpathians” Club association and the election of the association's board – which is presided by Alexandra Ochmańska. The Program Council of the Europe of the Carpathians Clubs was also established.



The goals of the Europe of the Carpathians Clubs are:

- inspiring the development and cooperation of states and cities in the Carpathian region.
- developing economic, scientific, cultural, and political cooperation between the countries of the Carpathian Region.
- promoting broadly understood culture in the regional, supra-regional and international sense.
- enhancing the attractiveness of the Carpathian region, based on the natural and cultural
- promotion and implementation of joint initiatives of states and cities in the Carpathian region

The activities of the Europe of the Carpathians Club association and the Association are based on the idea of a community. They are expressed in the program documents of the Association's Program Council.

The Association will achieve its goals in particular through:

- scientific and expert activity,
- educational, informational, publishing, and journalistic activity,
- project implementation,
- participation in co-creating foreign policy,
- organising seminars, trainings, debates and gathering and exchanging information, and promoting ideas developed by the Association.
- organizing scientific and humanities, economic, natural, and tourist conferences.



Establishment of the "Europe of the Carpathians Club", Krasiczyn, February 4, 2022

- organising publications, cultural and sports events, exhibitions, festivals, camps, rallies, tournaments, initiating cooperation of schools, cultural institutions, information and educational activities.
- preparation of reports in the field of foreign affairs and presentation of programs and strategies for conducting foreign policy by Poland,
- cooperation with non-governmental organisations, local government authorities and governmental in terms of achieving the goals of the Association,
- conducting training and scholarship programs for selected social groups, school and university youth, volunteers and specialists in various fields.



Meeting of the “Europe of the Carpathians” Club association during the 23rd International “Europe of the Carpathians” Conference in Krasiczyn-Yaremche

On May 13, 2022, the meeting of the “Europe of the Carpathians” club association has been held.

During the meeting, the procedure initiating the court registration of the “Europe of the Carpathians Club” association in Przemyśl has been launched.

The Presidium of the Program Council was established as follows:

1. Marek Kuchciński – Program Council’s President
2. Richard Hörcsik
3. Mykhaylo Khariy
4. Pavol Mačala
5. Ján Hudacký
6. Markiyan Malskyy
7. Maciej Szymanowski
8. Barbara Bartuś
9. Ștefan Purici
10. Jerzy Kwieciński
11. Władysław Ortyl

Marek Kuchciński has been chosen as the Program Council’s President.

Alexandra Ochmańska remained has been named President of the Management Board.



Richard Hörcsik, Member of the Presidium of the Program Council
of the Europe of the Carpathians Club

The participants of the meeting became members. This includes those who signed the attendance list as well as those who participated remotely and provided an electronic signature.

The seat of the Association address is:

“Europe of the Carpathians” Club association
ul. Wybrzeże Marszałka Józefa Piłsudskiego 1, 37-700 Przemyśl

The main seat of the secretariat of the Europe of the Carpathians Club will be located in the facilities of the Wacław Felczak Institute of Polish-Hungarian Cooperation in Warsaw, address:

Secretariat of the Europe of the Carpathians Club
ul. Seweryna Goszczyńskiego 12, 02-616, Warsaw

Contact: klubyeuropykarp@hotmai.com

Members of the Program Council:

- Adamczyk Arkadiusz, Poland
- Atamas-Paniw Natalia, Poland
- Babinetz Piotr, Poland
- Bartuś Barbara, Poland
- Berdychowski Zygmunt, Poland
- Busz Aleksander, Poland
- Cependa Igor, Ukraine
- Choma Robert, Poland
- Chrzan Tadeusz, Poland
- Czarski Janusz, Poland
- Daszyńska-Muzyczka Beata, Poland
- Draus Jan, Poland
- Fudała Janusz, Poland
- Gołębek Ewelina, Poland
- Hörcsik Richard, Hungary
- Hudacký Ján, Slovakia
- Jarosińska-Jedynak Małgorzata, Poland
- Jarosz Jan, Poland
- Khariy Mykhaylo, Ukraine
- Klarkowski Andrzej, Poland
- Kniazhytski Mykola, Ukraine
- Kot Beata, Poland
- Kovács István, Hungary
- Kuchcińska Beata, Poland
- Kuchciński Marek, Poland
- Kwieciński Jerzy, Poland
- Lasek Dawid, Poland
- Mačala Pavol, Slovakia
- Malicki Jan, Poland
- Malskyy Markiyan, Ukraine
- Mazur Andrzej, Poland
- Młynarek Christian, Poland

- Mularczyk Arkadiusz, Poland
- Nagy Dénes András, Hungary
- Naimski Piotr, Poland
- Ochmańska Alexandra, Poland
- Ortyl Władysław, Poland
- Paniw Andrzej, Poland
- Pilch Piotr, Poland
- Pragłowska Anna, Poland
- Purici Ștefan, Romania
- Sándor Őze, Hungary
- Šuplata Marián, Slovakia
- Szymanowski Maciej, Poland
- Terlecki Ryszard, Poland
- Wiglusz Waldemar, Poland
- Wijas Sebastian, Poland
- Zybertowicz Andrzej, Poland
- Żuk-Olszewski Dariusz, Slovakia



Inauguration of the Europe of the Carpathians Club in the Scruton Cafe in Budapest

On June 13, 2022, in the Scruton VP Cafe in the centre of Budapest, a debate was held on the current geopolitical situation, attended by Deputy Speaker of the Sejm Ryszard Terlecki, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee Marek Kuchciński, MP Bogusław Sonik, Balázs Orbán, director of the Hungarian prime minister's political office, and Zsolt Németh, chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Hungarian Parliament. The discussion was chaired by the director of the Wacław Felczak Institute of Polish-Hungarian Cooperation, Maciej Szymanowski. The meeting was attended by distinguished guests – including numerous former and present Hungarian politicians, members of the democratic opposition, analysts, and journalists.

During the meeting, there was a solemn promotion of the Hungarian edition of the book by the Deputy Speaker of the Sejm, Ryszard Terlecki, “Solidarity 1980–1989. The Polish road to freedom”, published by the Hungarian publishing house Magyar Napló.

Zsolt Németh noted at the outset that the last 100 days were an extremely difficult period in Polish-Hungarian relations and an important test for mutual friendship. The crisis between Warsaw and Budapest was obviously related to the differences between the two countries' approaches to the war in Ukraine. The chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Hungarian parliament emphasised that relations between the two countries were improving. In his opinion, the turning point was the May visit of the new Hungarian President Katalin Novák to Warsaw, which was followed by systematic warming of Polish-Hungarian relations.

Németh noted that during the ongoing negotiations between Warsaw and Budapest, it is clear that the position of Poland and Hungary is basically very similar. Both countries believe that Ukraine should be opened the way to membership in the European Union. A few days ago, the head of the Hungarian Foreign Affairs Committee,



Inauguration of the International Clubs of the Carpathian Europe at Scruton Cafe, from left: Zsolt Németh, Bogusław Sonik, Marek Kuchciński, Ryszard Terlecki, Balázs Orbán, Maciej Szymanowski, Budapest, June 13, 2022

together with his counterparts from the Baltic States, Czech Republic, and Poland, signed an appeal to accelerate work related to Ukraine's accession to the EU.

Politicians in Warsaw and Budapest also unanimously declare their support for the EU as a „Europe of nations”. Both countries also believe that Europe should care for strong Atlantic relations. Zsolt Németh also added that Poles and Hungarians agreed firmly to reject plans for the reconstruction of the Soviet Union. At the same time, however, he warned against rashly pushing through increasingly tougher sanctions against Russia and argued that before announcing new restrictions, it is necessary to carefully calculate the price we will pay for them.

Warming relations between Poland and Hungary, exchanging realistic and sober views and solving current and future challenges are to serve the cooperation within the framework of the International Europe of the Carpathians Clubs. Marshal Marek Kuchciński pointed out that Central Europe has an extremely rich history and a legacy

and that the latter ought not only to be cared for but also learned from. At the same time, he warned that it is in the interest of Western Europe, and especially of the EU federalists, to „drive a wedge into the spokes” of Polish-Hungarian cooperation.

According to Marek Kuchciński, the countries of the region can work together to overcome the barriers that remain in the European community, despite the lifting of borders and the introduction of a single EU market. Direct talks within the International Europe of the Carpathians Club are to facilitate mutual understanding without understatement, missed accusations, and disinformation. According to Marshal Kuchciński, if meetings such as the Scruton Cafe were held more often, governments would not have to rely on the image presented by the media, which often misleads public opinion, leading to the weakening of strategic cooperation between Budapest and Warsaw. „As the free with the free, and the equal with the equal” – this is how we need to build Europe, because when we had this motto, our neighbours did not pose a threat to us, said Marshal Kuchciński. This is exactly how he would see the European Union – as a Europe of homelands and not submission to the idea of a European super-state. He emphasised that this is what unites us and that we must be able to properly appreciate it. The Marshal said that thinking that Ukraine should give up part of its territory in exchange for peace, as is often heard in Western European countries, is an anachronism. The principle of inviolability of borders must remain indisputable. A new nation is currently emerging in Ukraine as Russian-speaking citizens speak out against the Russian-speaking aggressor. We, Poles, respect this and hence our great support for Ukraine.

Ryszard Terlecki, Deputy Speaker of the Sejm, also drew attention to the ongoing information war, emphasising the enormous impression made on him by the stupidity of the Russians and the surprising strength of the Ukrainians’ resistance. – If Russia wins this war, it may attack other countries: the Baltic States, Poland – warned Marshal Terlecki, explaining why it is so important for Poland to support Ukrainian sovereignty and consistently weaken Russia. He emphasised that despite the differences, we must be strong, we must be together and convince others to do so as well.

Minister Balázs Orbán presented Hungary’s point of view, pointing out that anyone can be their enemy or friend, and yet Hungary must grow stronger. He believes that the war is a great tragedy and poses a threat to his country. He compared the war to a film we all watch, but interpret differently. Both Hungary and Poland condemned Russia, supported Ukraine, and provided extraordinary humanitarian aid. However,

Europe must show greater unity. He argues that while Europe allowed military support for Ukraine, economic sanctions must be well-calculated. As an example, he pointed to the sanctions imposed on Russia in 2014 after the annexation of Crimea, which had no effect but heavy losses for Hungary, and yet 8 years later Russia attacked again. According to Balázs Orbán, the thinking of contemporary Hungarians comes primarily from the need to live in peace. From this point of view, it is less important who will win but rather how to restore peace, because that is how the interests of Hungary and Hungarians are commonly understood.

At the end of the meeting, the moderator of the panel, professor Maciej Szymanowski, referred to the patron of the Institute of Polish-Hungarian Cooperation – prof. Waław Felczak, and expressed his satisfaction with the fact that such a discussion – open, serious, and concrete – inaugurated the Europe of the Carpathians Clubs in Budapest.



The Carpathian Europe Documents

1. The Carpathian Memorandum, September 8, 2011
2. Conclusions adopted at the “Carpathian Europe” conference September 4–6, 2012
3. The Krasieczyn Declaration, February 23, 2013
4. The Krynica Memorandum, September 8, 2013
5. The Krynica Declaration, September 3, 2014
6. The Przemyśl Declaration, January 29, 2017

The Carpathian Memorandum, September 8, 2011

The Carpathians are an important part of Europe’s regional wealth. It is an area with great social, cultural and natural resources and, at the same time, one of the poorest and least recognized regions requiring coordinated support within the framework of European policy. The Carpathians have several important assets.

Firstly, they connect territories of strategic importance across the current borders of the EU – from the very core of Central Europe: Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, through Ukraine, to the Balkans with Romania and Serbia. Secondly, they constitute a unique environmental resource, being the “green backbone” of Central and Eastern Europe. Thirdly, it is a culturally and socially important region, inhabited by nearly 20 million people. The Carpathians are also a problem area.

Its basic weaknesses include infrastructural deficiencies, both in transportation and environmental safety, lack of due care for sustainable development, social problems, including areas of high unemployment. If we do not take coordinated development actions, the economic and social problems of the Carpathian region will grow. Therefore, we believe that the efforts of the countries, the European Union and individual



Inauguration of the International Clubs of the Carpathian Europe at Scruton Cafe, Budapest, June 13, 2022

regional authorities should be combined to develop a common strategy for the Carpathians, which would use the strengths of this area to overcome its weaknesses.

Such a strategy, following the example of the Baltic Sea Strategy and the Danube Strategy, should first and foremost be based on synergies between existing initiatives and actions undertaken in the region and thus provide added value without creating new structures, regulations or institutions.

We would like to apply for funding for actions in the Carpathian region in a coordinated manner so that the resources, especially from the EU budget, are not dispersed but strategically directed towards joint Carpathian projects. A mechanism for financing joint activities aimed at sustainable development of the Carpathians could be created based on models provided by both the current EU macro-regional development strategies and initiatives such as the European Alpine Space program. (*Alpine Space*).

The number of existing good practices and initiatives in the Carpathian region convinces us that – with a well-developed strategy – we can achieve the desired concrete results of a new initiative in a relatively short period of time, be it in the field

of academic cooperation (“the Carpathian University”), environmental cooperation, infrastructure cooperation or the interregional project “Carpathian Horizon”.

Such cooperation will serve in particular to strengthen ties between the EU Member States and Ukraine, contributing to the accelerated integration of this country into European structures. A first step that could symbolically, as well as practically, demonstrate the commitment of European policy to the Carpathian region would be for the European Union to become a party to the Carpathian Convention, to which individual states are currently signatories. The Union, having obtained such a capacity by virtue of the Treaty of Lisbon, should use it in this type of initiatives.

Our common goal is to create a new European macro-regional development strategy already within the framework of the future financial framework 2014–2020. This is possible with the support of the main actors of European policy, both at the level of successive presidencies as well as the Commission and the European Parliament.

We call for such a commitment. The Carpathians are worthy of a European strategy.

Conclusions adopted at the conference “Carpathian Europe”, September 4–6, 2012

1. The Carpathians are an important region in Europe. Support for development activities in the Carpathians can give impetus to the growth of the EU

On the eve of the decisions on the financial perspective of the European Union for the period 2014–2020, it is important to emphasize the importance of cohesion policy for the implementation of one of the most important objectives of the Community – a harmonious social and economic development throughout the Union. Budget support for development activities in the Carpathian region will not only contribute to the economic development of the EU, help in the fight against unemployment and social exclusion, but should also be an important part of the search for new potential to regain growth momentum.

We cannot afford that Europe does not take full advantage of the resources found in the Carpathians. Today, this is hampered by infrastructural barriers, lack of appropriate, specifically targeted programs to support regional cooperation, and border difficulties.



Meeting in the Scruton Cafe, Budapest, February 18, 2022

Therefore, our goal should be to strive to overcome these obstacles and launch special cooperation programs at the local and regional level within the adopted financial framework for 2014–2020.

We encourage governments and self-governments of the Carpathian countries to undertake such initiatives. They could constitute a kind of “pilot projects” for the future macro-regional Carpathian Strategy of the European Union.

2. Cooperation of national parliaments in the form of the “Carpathian Parliamentary Cooperation Network” should become an important link in the Carpathian cooperation

Cooperation in the Carpathian region should not be limited only to governmental contacts and cooperation of local governments. Contacts of national parliaments should become an important element of cooperation. They can be an important platform for the exchange of experiences, joint interstate projects and coordination of policy in the Carpathians.

These needs gave rise to the initiative of establishing special ‘Carpathian Parliamentary Groups’ (Carpathian Circles or Carpathian Clubs, depending on the name adopted in a given country) in the parliaments of all the Carpathian countries. They would

consist of parliamentarians of different parties and various specializations, united by the idea of cooperation in the Carpathians. These groups, acting together, would create a natural “Carpathian Parliamentary Cooperation Network” and thus could become a basis for substantive cooperation on specific issues in the field of infrastructure, environment, economy or culture.

3. Local entrepreneurship linked to the common good should take priority over transnational investors

The Carpathian region is a special economic region, where investment and development must coexist in a sustainable manner with rich environmental resources which are the national wealth of the Carpathian countries. Therefore, in supporting the development of tourism and related services, attention should be paid to ensuring national ownership of natural assets, especially national parks, and supporting local communities so that they are able to face competition from transnational investors.

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

Nature in the Carpathians is a unique environmental resource on a European scale. Therefore, it requires constant protection and working out such models of development of this area that would not disturb the natural harmony of man with the ecosystem. The Carpathians cannot be an open-air museum of Europe. They must develop and become richer but their natural values must not be destroyed. Therefore, it is important for the European Union, as an international organization, in accordance with the Treaty of Lisbon, to accede to the Carpathian Convention guaranteeing sustainable development.

The Krasiczyn Declaration, February 23, 2013

We, the participants of the “Europe of the Carpathians” conference in Krasiczyn, share the conviction that the Carpathians are an important element of the European regional wealth. With their unique characteristics, the Carpathians are today one of the two most important mountainous regions in Europe. After the recent enlargement of



Pavol Mačala, Member of the Presidium of the Program Council
of the Europe of the Carpathians Club

the European Union, the Carpathians are also its eastern border. This significantly increases the importance of this area in ensuring sustainable development and cohesion of the Community.

Nowadays, the inhabitants of the Carpathian macro-region face numerous difficulties. Lack of transport infrastructure, visible differences in the social situation, including high structural unemployment, mean that without precise developmental measures, the situation of the inhabitants of the Carpathian region will deteriorate. Activity for the modernization and development of the Carpathian macro-region is necessary not only from the point of view of selected member states but that of the entire European Union, especially in the context of its future enlargement to the east.

We believe that it is necessary to coordinate actions for the benefit of the Carpathians in many areas. Their essence should be to strengthen interstate, regional and trans-boundary cooperation in economic, social and cultural dimensions, so that the macro-region presents a coherent vision of development on the forum of the European

Union. Only a joint effort of societies, parliaments, governments and local authorities of the Carpathian countries will create the possibility of effective advocacy for the interests of the Carpathians in the European forum.

National parliaments can play an important role here by creating the Carpathian Network for Parliamentary Cooperation. This network should enable regular contacts between members of parliament from the Carpathian countries in all areas of interest to them. An important step leading to the creation of such a network would be the establishment of Carpathian parliamentary groups both in individual national parliaments and in the European Parliament and, in the future, the establishment of a Carpathian parliamentary assembly would be considered.

We emphasize the importance of the Association of the Carpathian Euroregion as an institution that coordinates and activates activities for the development of the area. We support the proposal of creating a transnational European Territorial Cooperation Operational Program for the area of the Carpathian Euroregion in the 2014–2020 perspective called “Carpathian Horizon 2020”. Such a solution would contribute to improve the coordination and increase the effectiveness of the existing financial instruments of the European Union supporting multilateral territorial cooperation. The program should include all areas that will apply to join it.

At the same time, we appeal to the European Union for more active support of the goals set out in the Carpathian Convention signed in Kiev on May 23, 2003, and we also call for accelerated efforts for the EU to formally accede to this Convention as a party. In particular, closer cooperation on water and forest management is necessary. We also consider it important to implement the tasks enshrined in the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism to the Carpathian Convention.

We are pleased to note numerous examples of cross-border cooperation between partners from the Carpathian countries. We consider the initiative to start work on the publishing of the Carpathian Encyclopaedia to be extremely valuable. For this purpose we are establishing a working group of representatives of a number of universities interested in the issues of the Carpathians.

We are attentively following the progress of activities related to the renovation of the former Astronomical Observatory on the summit of Pop Ivan in Czarnohora and the construction of the center for academic cooperation in Mikuliczyn, in which Warsaw University and the National University of Carpathia in Ivano-Frankivsk are engaged in a joint project.

We draw attention to the common shepherding traditions belonging for centuries to the basic forms of activity of the Carpathian highlanders. An initiative worthy of promotion in this regard is the international Carpathian Redyk-Transhumance 2013, organized this year as a traditional hike with sheep from Romania, through Ukraine, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic.

Further expansion of border infrastructure will greatly facilitate the development of cooperation between the Carpathian countries – members of the European Union – and Ukraine. Therefore, we strongly support increasing the number of border crossings on the western border of Ukraine.

Moreover, reaching out for concerted demands and opinions of circles and institutions connected with the public and private media sector operating in the Carpathian area, we support the initiative to create an international platform for cooperation of the Carpathian media in order to jointly promote, develop and implement effective systems of information exchange.

We also emphasize that the overarching goal of all activities should be to work out a European macro-regional development strategy for the whole Carpathians, with the involvement of all interested countries and regions as well as European institutions. The establishment of this strategy would be of crucial importance for the territorial cohesion and for strengthening the cooperation not only between the Carpathian countries and regions but also between the European Union and its eastern partners. The macro-regional Carpathian Strategy (“Carpathia 2020” – CEEC – Cooperation, Economy, Environment, Culture) should be primarily oriented towards cooperation, including economic development, environmental protection and culture. An element of this strategy should be the inclusion of the “Via Carpathia” road into the TEN-T trans-European transport network. This route, running through the eastern areas of the EU, should become a kind of core around which the sustainable development of the entire Carpathian macro-region will be built.

The Krynica Memorandum, September 8, 2013

The participants of the Conference “Carpathian Europe” gathered in Krynica, decided as follows:

1. Propose to the national parliaments the creation of Carpathian parliamentary groups. A further step could be to take steps towards the creation of an



Nagy Dénes András, Members of the Program Council of the Europe of the Carpathians Clubs

Interparliamentary Assembly of East-Central Europe. The Assembly should become a platform of permanent cooperation between the parliamentarians of the countries of the region. Its goal should be to work for the subjective development of East Central Europe. Due to its parliamentary character, the work of the Assembly will bring together politicians from different sides of the political divide and thus guarantee continuity of cooperation regardless of governmental changes.

2. Take steps to create intergroups in the European Parliament that would work on Carpathian cooperation.
3. Act on the forum of the European Union and governments of Carpathian countries in order to promote and implement the concept of EU macro-regional strategy for the Carpathian region. This strategy, by linking the development efforts of the EU, countries and regions, should become a strong impulse for sustainable and dynamic development of this part of Europe. We consider the development of traditional branches of the economy, agriculture, tourism,

action for the benefit of national culture and the development of infrastructure linking our countries to be particularly important. These priorities should be properly integrated into operational programs for the disbursement of EU funds within the financial perspective 2014–2020.

4. Support the idea of protection of the heritage and cultural and natural environment of the Carpathians through the Carpathian Convention and especially extend the impact of this initiative to other countries in the region and international organizations.
5. Work to initiate regular meetings of intellectuals from Central and Eastern Europe to reflect on European identity and work to broaden and disseminate knowledge about our region. Related to this initiative is the idea of establishing a Carpathian University with the aim of both developing scientific research that will serve comprehensive development and popularizing it in academic and educational circles.

The Krynica Declaration, September 3, 2014

The war in Ukraine represents the greatest security threat to Europe since the end of the Cold War.

This threat stems from the fact that, once again after the Russian-Georgian war in 2008, Russia's aggression is changing borders by force and seeks to recognize this as a permanent state.

The annexation and occupation of Crimea and the encroachment of Russian troops on the territory of eastern Ukraine are a violation of the basic principles of international law, undermine the principle of territorial integrity and state sovereignty, which are the foundations of peaceful order in relations between states.

In this situation, it is largely the reaction of individual countries, the entire region of Central and Eastern Europe, the North Atlantic Alliance and the European Union that not only determines peace in Ukraine, but also whether Europe will be safe and remain a continent of the rule of law and universal values.

Passivity in the face of these facts is no choice. The policy of appeasement can still lead today to the catastrophe that Europe already went through once 75 years ago.

Therefore, the participants of the "Carpathian Europe" Conference gathered in Krynica on September 3, 2014 strongly condemn the policy of Russian aggression that



Markiyan Malsky and Maciej Szymanowski, Members of the Presidium of the Program Council of the Europe of the Carpathians Clubs

destabilizes Eastern Europe and call on the states of the transatlantic community to respond consistently and adequately to this threat, including by expanding the defense capabilities of the allied states from Central and Eastern Europe.

Ukraine should be fully supported today in any form it may request, and the joint transatlantic response to Russia should be strong enough to deter its further aggression and restore Ukraine's territorial integrity, including Crimea.

We especially call on the countries of our region to find a way to respond to the war in Ukraine with unity and solidarity. We express solidarity with all the victims of the occupation of Crimea and the war in Ukraine, especially the families of the fallen soldiers.



Ján Hudacký, Member of the Presidium of the Program Council
of the Europe of the Carpathians Clubs

The Przemyśl Declaration, January 29, 2017

On the road to responsible development – the foundations of the EU
Carpathian macro-regional strategy

The Carpathian region has for many years been an area of cooperation between sovereign nation-states of Central and Eastern Europe, which is implemented on several levels: presidential, governmental, parliamentary and self-governmental. We have given it an interstate and cross-border character in the form of the Carpathian Europe initiative. The Visegrad Group constitutes its institutional basis. Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic together present the interests of our region in the European Union in cooperation with other Carpathian countries, striving for its renewal in order to overcome the crisis and meet the challenges facing Europe. We advocate a return in the European Union to its fundamental values, including Christianity. This is because the principles of subsidiarity, auxiliary and solidarity were derived from them.

Understanding the uniqueness of the Carpathian region, whose potential stems from its cultural, economic and social diversity and the willingness of states and societies to cooperate, we consider it necessary for the European Union to adopt a macro-regional development strategy for the Carpathians. The Carpathian strategy should play a special role as a mechanism for cooperation and joint undertakings. In this way, it will significantly reduce the peripherality of our region, increase its security and strengthen public support for the European Union.

European unity, understood as cooperation of sovereign nation states, should be based on the model of responsible development. The aim of the Carpathian cooperation in the coming years is to build the North-South axis, which is necessary to increase economic cohesion in the region and its communication accessibility. In this context, investments of strategic importance in the economic sphere are: "Via Carpathia" together with the S19 road, the Podłęże-Piekielko railroad line, the Odra-Dunaj canal. We also support other regional initiatives for responsible development, such as: Interreg Central Europe Transnational Cooperation Program, Poland-Belarus-Ukraine Cross-Border Cooperation Program 2014–2020, cooperation in youth exchange, Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians, Carpathian Institute, Beskid Ski Centre. We will work towards popularizing tourism for intercultural communication and building strong ties between local communities. We believe it is necessary to expand the border crossings and create new ones. We are in favor of inscribing transboundary Austro-Hungarian fortifications, including the Przemyśl Fortress, on the UNESCO World Heritage List. In order to strengthen cooperation in the region, we support organization of conferences of Carpathian parliamentary groups and Carpathian economic forum.

We believe that the macro-regional Carpathian Strategy, based on responsible development, will bring socially expected results in economy, infrastructure, education, ecology and culture. By increasing innovation and creating space for entrepreneurship it will strengthen the competitiveness and effectiveness of economies of countries in the Carpathian region. It will also contribute to the protection of the multicultural heritage in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as natural diversity and tourism assets.

Calendar of the Europe of the Carpathians Conference

1999

The then Deputy Governor of the Podkarpackie voivodeship, Marek Kuchciński, launched the „Green Carpathians” project, the aim of which was to develop Polish-Slovak-Ukrainian cooperation

22 V 2003

Adoption in Kiev of the Framework Convention for the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (the so-called Carpathian Convention)

27 II 2006

Signing of the the Carpathian Convention by the President of the Republic of Poland Lech Kaczyński

19 VI 2006

Poland ratifies the Carpathian Convention

30 XI 2007

1st parliamentary meeting of the Carpathian states. initiated by the chairman of the Commission for Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and the Forestry Department of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Marek Kuchciński, MP

26 II 2011

2nd “Europe of the Carpathians” conference in Przemyśl

25 VI 2011

3rd International “Europe of the Carpathians” conference in Nowy Targ under the slogan: “Europe rich of the Carpathians”

7–8 IX 2011

4th International “Europe of the Carpathians” conference at the Economic Forum in Krynica-Zdrój. Adoption of the Carpathian memorandum.

25 II 2012

5th “Europe of the Carpathians” conference in Krasiczyn, near Przemyśl

6–9 VII 2012

6th meeting on the topic of the development of Carpathian cooperation in Yaremcha, in Ukraine.

6 IX 2012

7th International “Europe of the Carpathians” conference at the Economic Forum in Krynica-Zdrój.

23 II 2013

8th International “Europe of the Carpathians” conference in Krasiczyn, near Przemyśl, adoption of the Krasiczyn Convention

8 IX 2013

9th International “Europe of the Carpathians” conference at the Economic Forum in Krynica-Zdrój, adoption of the Krinica memorandum

29–30 XI 2013

Meeting on the development of Carpathian cooperation in Sárospatak, Hungary

3 IX 2014

11th International “Europe of the Carpathians” conference at the Economic Forum in Krynica-Zdrój, adoption of the Krynica Declaration

27–28 II 2015

12th International “Europe of the Carpathians” conference in Krasiczyn, near Przemyśl

25 VII 2015

13th International “Europe of the Carpathians” conference in Smerek, near Wetlina

9 IX 2015

14th International “Europe of the Carpathians” conference at the Economic Forum in Krynica-Zdrój

27 II	2016
15th International "Europe of the Carpathians" conference in Przemyśl	

6–8 IX	2016
16th International "Europe of the Carpathians" conference at the Economic Forum of Krynica-Zdrój	

29 I	2017
17th International "Europe of the Carpathians" conference in Przemyśl, adoption of the Przemyśl Declaration	

23–25 VI	2017
18th session of the "Europe of the Carpathians" series as part of the 2nd Forum on Local development in Truskavets, Ukraine	

5–7 IX	2017
19th International "Europe of the Carpathians" conference at the Economic Forum in Krynica-Zdrój Konferencja "Europa Karpat"	

17 II	2018
20th International "Europe of the Carpathians" conference in Przemyśl	

16 VI	2018
21st International "Europe of the Carpathians" conference in Regietów	

5–6 IX	2018
22nd International "Europe of the Carpathians" conference at the Economic Forum in Krynica-Zdrój	

16–17 II	2019
23rd International "Europe of the Carpathians" conference in Krasiczyn	

15 VI	2019
24th International "Europe of the Carpathians" conference in Regietów	

4–5 IX	2019
25th International "Europe of the Carpathians" conference at the Economic Forum in Krynica-Zdrój	

21–23 II	2020
26th International "Europe of the Carpathians" conference in Krasiczyn	

8–9 IX	2020
27th International "Europe of the Carpathians" conference in Karpacz	

27–28 II	2021
28th International "Europe of the Carpathians" conference in Przemyśl	

19 VI	2021
29th International "Europe of the Carpathians" conference in Regietów	

7–9 IX	2021
30th International "Europe of the Carpathians" conference in Karpacz	

27 XI	2021
31st International "Europe of the Carpathians" conference in Węgierska Góra	

5–6 II	2022
32nd International "Europe of the Carpathians" conference in Przemyśl/ Krasiczyn, signing of the International Europe of the Carpathians club Declaration	

5 IV	2022
Establishment of the "Europe of the Carpathians club"	

13–14 V	2022
33rd International "Europe of the Carpathians" conference in Krasiczyn	