



## **Declaration of Intent to Create the EU Macro-Regional Strategy for the Carpathian Region**

**Krynica-Zdrój, 5 September 2018**

**We, the representatives of the Governments of Hungary,  
Poland, the Slovak Republic and Ukraine**

**Bearing in mind** that the EU Strategy for the Carpathian Region (later on referred to as the Strategy) has to be in line with and serve the values of the European Union, principles and policies as enshrined in the Treaties;

**Recognizing** the importance of EU macro-regional strategies in addressing development disparities and enhancing regional capabilities, and also the added value resulting from international co-operation, allowing for the exchange of good practices, the implementation of common policies, and effectively linking European communities in economic, social and territorial dimension, the involvement of non EU countries;

**Recalling** the Council conclusions from 6 April 2017 on the implementation of the EU macro-regional strategies concerning new macro-regional strategies which state that Council of the EU “*remains open to examine any commonly agreed and mature initiative of Member States facing the same challenges in a defined geographic area aimed at setting up a new macro-regional strategy*”;

**Taking into account** the experience of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region, the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region and other cross border cooperation programmes;

**Recognizing** the Carpathian Region as an extremely important geopolitical area in which strategic political interests cross, and - after the EU enlargement by becoming its Eastern border – whose significance for the stability of the whole Union has grown further;

**Noting** that the Carpathian Region is a unique, coherent area with untapped potential which, due to specific social, economic, historical, cultural and natural mountainous conditions, requires particular attention and support from the entire European Union;

**Confident** that enhanced targeted cooperation under the EU Strategy for the Carpathian Region is of paramount importance to all countries and citizens in the region by providing new additional benefits in political, economic, ecological and cultural terms;

**Acknowledging** the importance of an integrated approach to the identification of common needs, solutions, challenges and opportunities and matching them with available territorial resources without prejudice to the negotiation of the future cohesion policy of the EU;

**Emphasizing** that the EU Strategy for the Carpathian Region will serve the goal of increasing prosperity, security and peace for the people living there, especially through enhancing cross-border, trans-regional cooperation and coordination;

**Being aware** that countries of the Carpathian Region have improved transport accessibility, but remain poorly integrated with each other in terms of infrastructure, which hinders their economic cooperation and market development;

**Convinced** that the Strategy, through its features of inclusiveness and comprehensiveness, will also be highly beneficial for participating non EU States - candidates and potential candidates to the EU;

**Bearing in mind** that the Strategy will be complementary to the existing co-operation structures, especially such as the Carpathian Convention and the EU Strategy for the Danube Region;

**Noting** complementary role of the existing solid set of regional and sub-regional cooperation already active both at intergovernmental and grassroots level – the latter involving regions, cities, chambers of commerce, universities, civil society organizations, etc.

**Appreciating** the importance of transregional cooperation between the countries and regions of the Carpathians and having a common goal resulting from similar challenges in achieving the desired level of economic and social development while preserving the value of the region's natural environment;

We ask the European Commission to support the process of preparing and implementing the EU Macro-Regional Strategy for the Carpathian Region and to grant the Strategy the similar importance given to the other macro-regional strategies implemented in the EU. As a basis for this work the proposed strategy concept can be used.

**We affirm our readiness to:**

- Be actively involved in the process of setting up the EU Macro-Regional Strategy for the Carpathian Region;
- Strengthen cooperation, synergies and partnership to better address the key challenges at various levels – national and regional;
- Work in cooperation to find solutions to the challenges the region is facing in the above mentioned fields of common interest;
- Base the Strategy on the Carpathian Convention and its achievements, cooperate with already existing EU macro-regional strategies in particular with the Danube Strategy and other regional and sub-regional structures;
- Use sustainably, carefully and rationally the natural resources of the Carpathian Region in order to protect the natural heritage, environment and human health and adapt to the changing climate;