



Macro-regional Strategy for the Carpathians - a local government perspective

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What I will talk about?

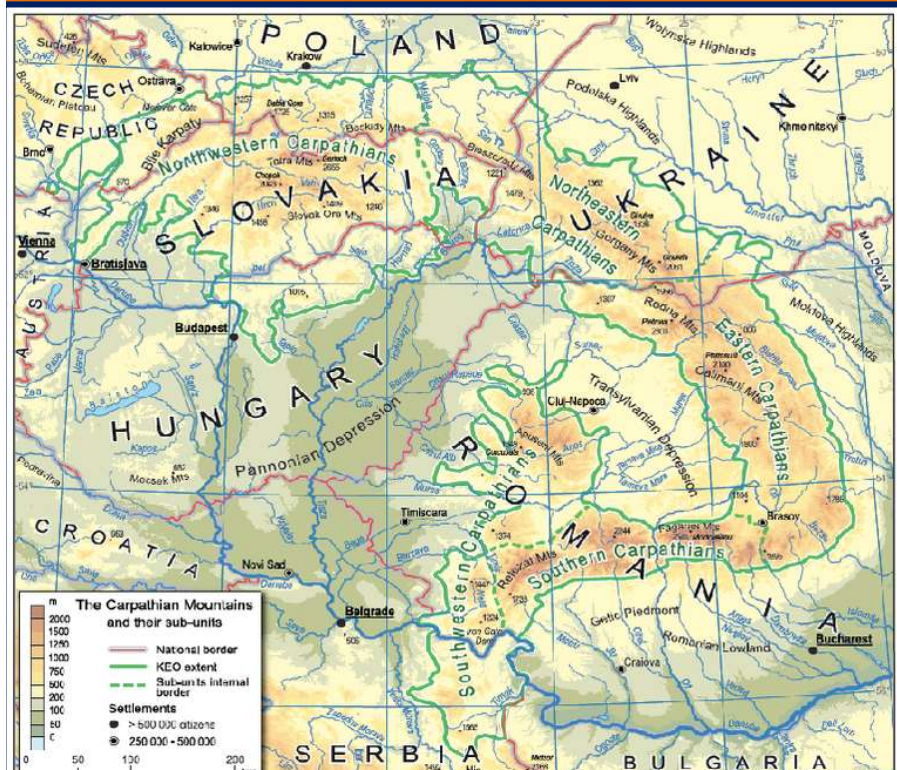
1. The specificity of the Carpathian area.
2. EU Macro-regional Strategies.
3. Relation between the Convention and the Carpathian Strategy.
4. Cooperation within the Carpathian community.
5. Carpathian Interregional Group.
6. Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions on Macro-regional Strategy for the Carpathian Region.

Carpathians



- ❖ A geopolitically important area - the eastern border of the European Union
- ❖ Huge potential and space for regional integration
- ❖ The area of potential development opportunities
- ❖ The Carpathians have unique endogenous resources:
 - rich biodiversity
 - high tourist attractiveness
 - cultural heritage
 - unique human resources
 - shared identity and experiences of history

Carpathians



- Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Hungary

➔ EU member states

- Moldova, Serbia, Ukraine

➔ the candidate countries

Mountain specificity of the Carpathian area



Environmental

- „Eastern Carpathians” International Biosphere Reserve
- 36 national parks – area 11 000 km²
- 51 landscape parks – area 19 000 km²
- 200 other forms of protection
- one of the most important predator refuges
- **only** 16% of the area outside forms of protection



Geographical

- the topography is determined by the settlement network and spatial development, i.e. a large number of small towns in the valleys and the lack of large cities
- the mountainous area limits the possibilities of adapting the infrastructure to the needs of the inhabitants
- the need to maintain forms of nature protection
- spatial conditions hinder the development of the expected transport connections

The green lungs of Europe

- an area of 190 000 km²
- inhabited by approximately 68 million people
- the last great wilderness area in Europe
- home for large predators
- over half the population of bears, wolves and lynx on the continent
- the largest preserved virgin forest reserve

EU macro-regional strategies

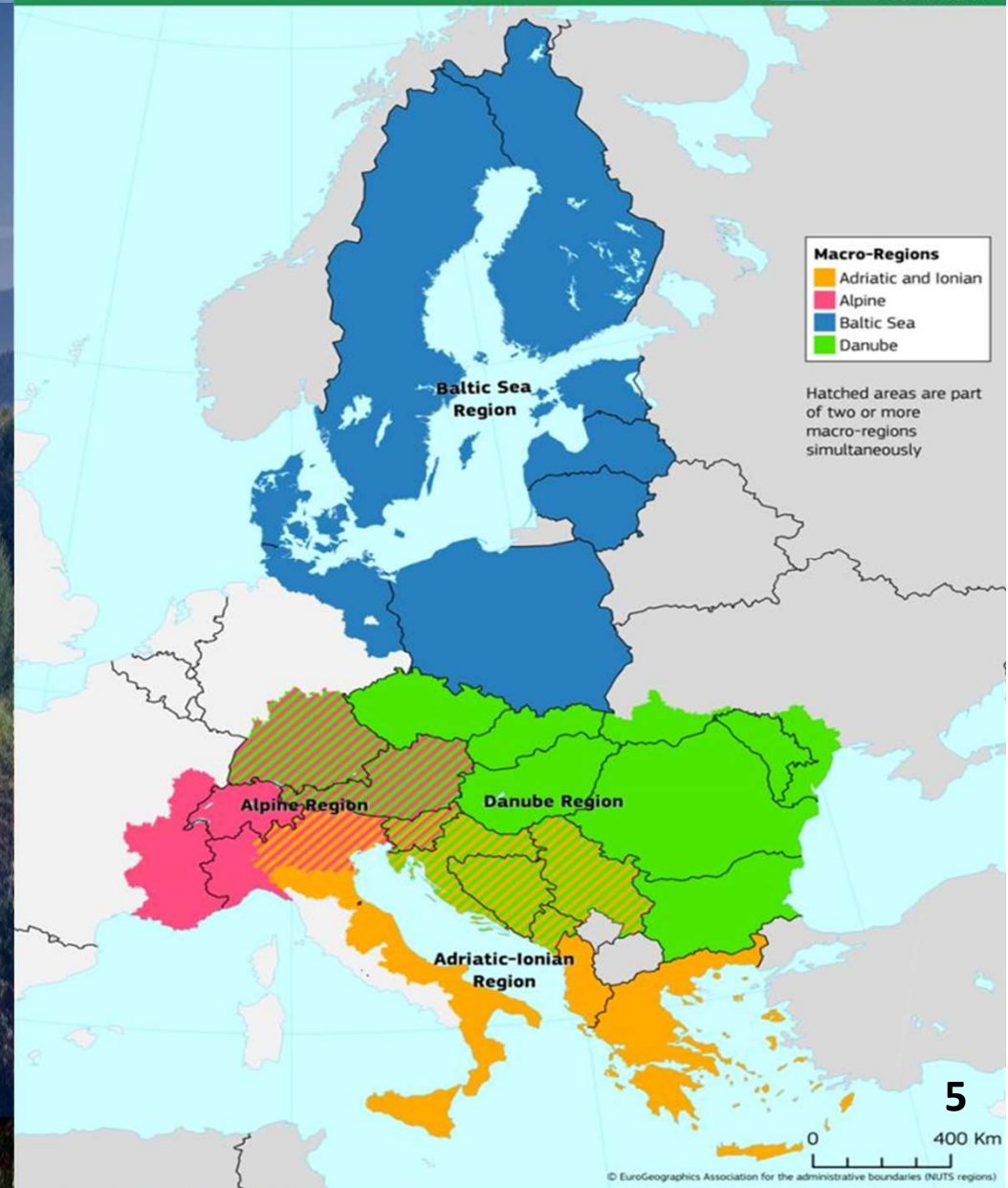
There are currently four EU macro-regional strategies:

- EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR; 2009),
- EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR; 2010),
- EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR; 2014 r.)
- EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP; 2016).

There are also initiatives to create new strategies for the Carpathian, Atlantic, Iberian and Mediterranean regions.

Most EU Member States are included in the macro-regional strategy agenda and some EU countries are involved in several strategies.

Macro-Regions:
Adriatic and Ionian, Alpine, Baltic, Danube



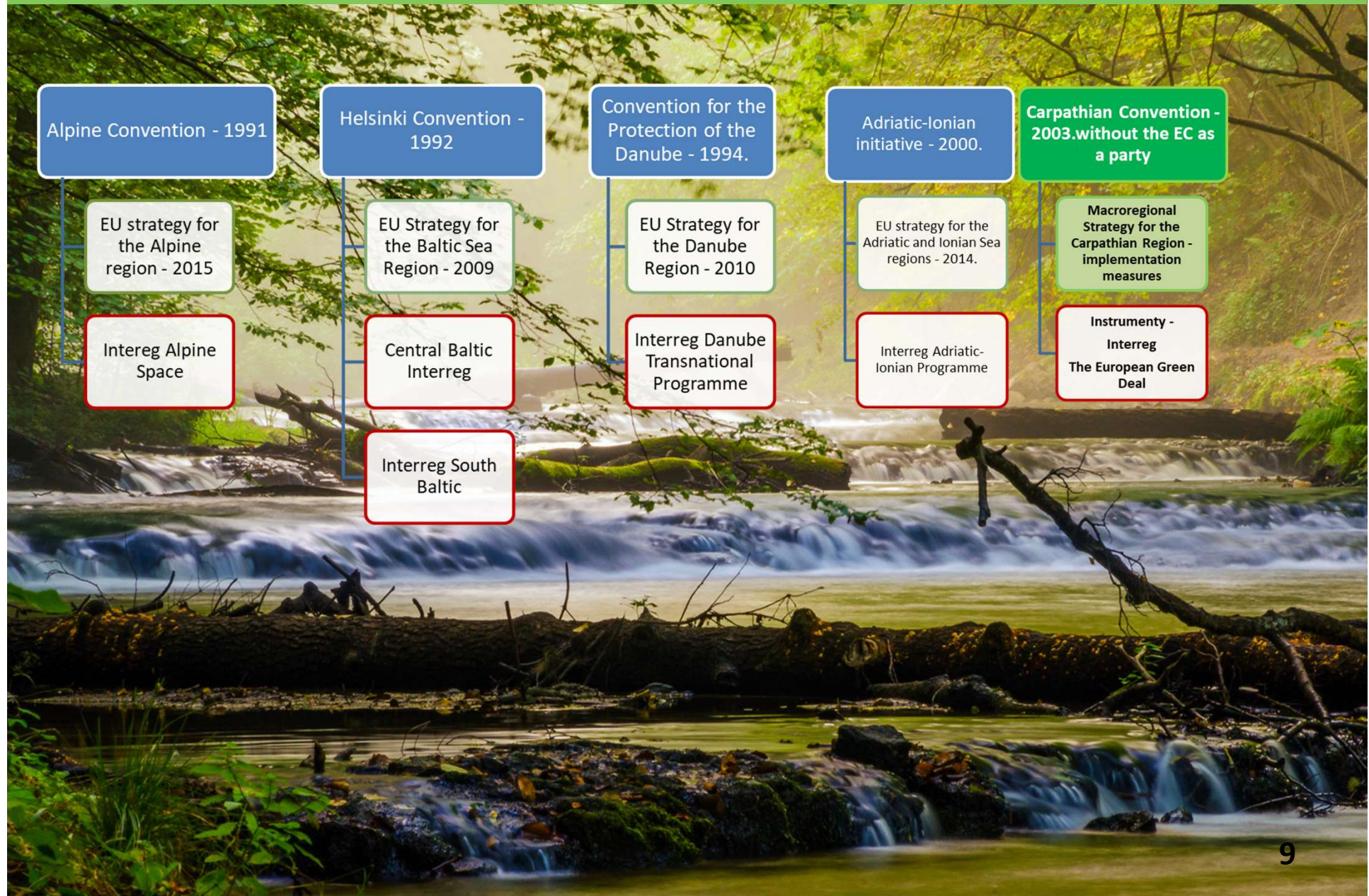
Arguments of the Carpathian Strategy

- Growing support for the initiative to create a macro-regional strategy for the Carpathian area
- A response to the need to expand and deepen the cooperation of states and communities in the Carpathian area
- The Carpathian Strategy is a mature initiative taken at all levels of government

Strategic goals of the Carpathian Strategy

- ✓ **Competitive Carpathians** - *Development of clean industries, Sustainable tourism development, Increased competitiveness of the agri-food sector, Development of a macro-regional innovation ecosystem.*
- ✓ **Green Carpathians** - *Protection and rational management of natural resources, Diversification of energy sources, Water reservoir, Management of environmental risks and natural hazards*
- ✓ **Coherent Carpathians** - *Increasing transport accessibility of the Carpathians, Increasing digital accessibility of the Carpathians, Development of e-services system*

Initiatives and tools for European macro-regions working for the Carpathian Convention

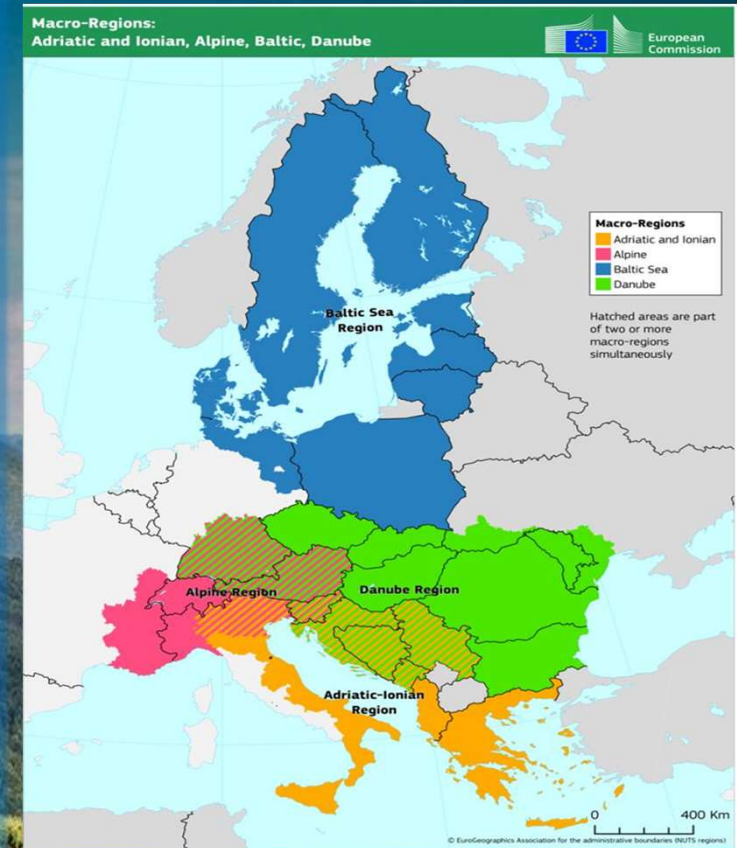


Connection of the Carpathian Strategy with the Carpathian Convention

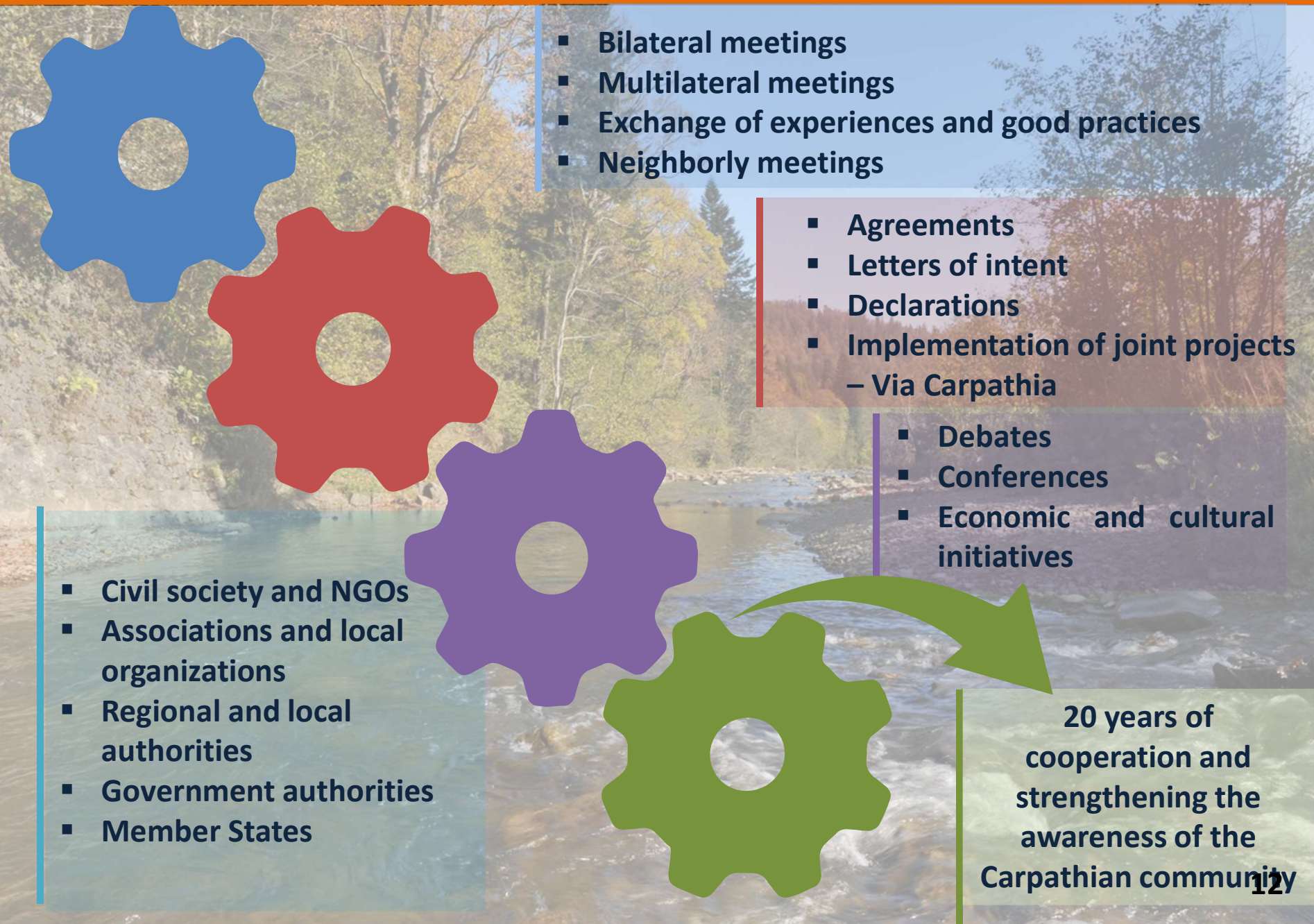
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- **Need for a joint decision by the governments of the Carpathian countries**
 - meetings at ministerial level
 - MEPs' activities
 - **Support from the European Committee of the Regions**
 - debates
 - opinion in the COTER committee
 - **Bottom-up activities**

Carpathian and Danube Strategy

- Macroregional strategies interpenetrate each other both territorially and thematically.
- The territorial impact area of the Danube Strategy is partly the area covered by the EUSALP Strategy or the EUSAIR Strategy.
- The priority areas indicated for individual macro-regional strategies contain common problem areas, the broadest scope is covered by the Danube Strategy.
- This does not result in mutual competition, but allows for a better adjustment of initiatives, programs and activities undertaken within the framework of individual strategies to the specific nature of a given territory.
- The challenge is to define the interrelationship between existing macro-regional strategies as well as with future strategies.



Cooperation within the Carpathian community



Existing forms of cooperation

- Carpathian Euroregion
- Carpathian Convention
- Interregional Carpathian Group in the Committee of the Regions
- Economic Forum with a thematic panel
- Forum of Carpathian Communes
- Local Development Forum
- Carpathian Days of Good Neighborhood
- Interreg projects and European Neighborhood Instrument Programs



Interregional Carpathian Group

- Group established in February 2016
- First meeting: December 2016.
- 27 members from 5 national delegations     
- 4 of 6 political groups represented, including non-attached members.
- Meetings are usually held twice a year.



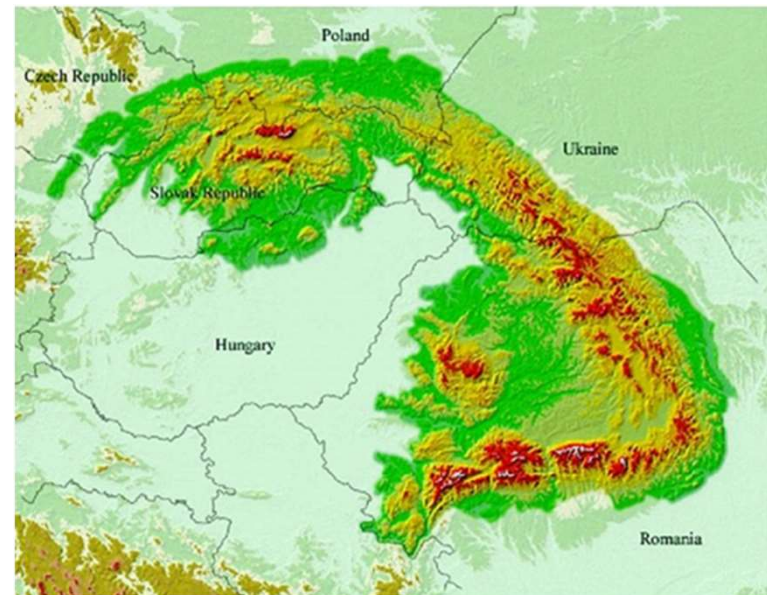
Chairman: Władysław Ortyl (PL/ EKR)

Vice-Chairmen: Adrian Teban (RO/ EPP) & Oszkár Seszták (HU/ EPP)



Group Goals

- Identifying possibilities for the creation of the 5th EU macro-regional strategy
- Promotion of multi-level management
- Focusing on the role of local and regional authorities to support sustainable development
- Work on and then promoting the opinion of the European Committee of the Regions on the Macroregional Strategy for the Carpathian Area



Opinion in the COTER Committee

- adopted at the plenary session of the European Committee of the Regions in December 2019;
- 18 notes that the Carpathian Convention is a multi-sectoral management mechanism covering the Carpathian region that enables inter-sectoral integration and widespread participation of stakeholders from various levels (national, regional, non-governmental, etc.) The multi-level cooperation standards that have been developed and have resulted in five thematic protocols on the Carpathian Convention can be used as an important part of further cooperation;
- acknowledging the positive impact of the Carpathian Convention, the importance of its objectives and their convergence with the EU's priorities, calls on the European Commission to take action towards the EU joining this Convention as a party, and points out that the EU is already a party to the Alpine Convention.




European Committee
of the Regions

COTER-VI/057
137th plenary session, 4-5 December 2019

OPINION
Macro-regional strategy for the Carpathian region

THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

- underlines that macro-regional Strategies improve the complementarity of various political strategies and programmes that are designated and implemented at different levels of governance. This pooling of jointly defined potential and coordination of actions is a significant added value at the European level;
- highlights the unique resources of the Carpathians, such as the natural wealth, unique multicultural heritage, human resources and common identity of mountain communities, all of which provide a great opportunity to work together towards more dynamic, sustainable and balanced socio-economic development in the area;
- considers that placing the Carpathian issue at the centre of a strategic document would highlight the problems of this area and make it possible to exploit the currently dormant and unique potential of the whole macro-region by focusing actions on the most important horizontal problems and challenges;
- reiterates and confirms the approval expressed many times of the initiative to develop a macro-regional strategy for the Carpathian region and sees it as a well-developed initiative undertaken at all levels of government;
- calls on the European Commission to support the initiative to create a macro-regional strategy for the Carpathian region as a further macro-regional strategy and the second one to address a European region with mountainous characteristics;
- considers that the macro-regional strategy instrument enables more effective use to be made of available financial resources as part of the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) objective, by creating a viable system for co-financing and implementing actions supporting the regions of Carpathian countries.

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Increasing support for the creation of the Carpathian Strategy

International appeals and support positions:

- Joint appeal of the representatives of Podkarpackie (PL) and Centrum (RO) regions on joint international work on project proposals for the development of the Carpathian Macroregion, Braszow, March 9-10, 2020.
- A joint appeal by the Romanian North-West provinces of Maramures, Sălaj, Bistrița-Năsăud taken in April 2021.
- SK8 common position of support for the creation of the Macroregional Strategy for the Carpathian Region, Slovakia, 18 June 2020.
- Joint resolution of the Ukrainian Oblasts of Transcarpathia, Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk and Chernivtsi, November 2020.
- Appeal of the North-Eastern Development Region of Romania, March 2021.
- Joint resolution of the province of the North-Western Development Region of Romania, May 2021.



Initiatives taken within the Carpathian area

Regional and local initiatives :

- Agreement of mountain rescue services from Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine on joint actions aimed at creating a Macroregional Strategy for the Carpathian Region - November 19, 2020.
- Joint declaration of the voivodships: Podkarpackie, Małopolskie and Śląskie - 27 November 2020.
- The position of the Podkarpackie Regional Assembly expressing support for the creation of the Macroregional Strategy for the Carpathians - February 15, 2021.
- The position of the Śląskie Regional Assembly expressing support for the creation of the Macroregional Strategy for the Carpathian Area - February 15, 2021.
- Statement of the Małopolska Regional Assembly on the adoption of the Position of the Małopolska Regional Assembly expressing support for the creation of the Macroregional Strategy for the Carpathian Area - May 24, 2021.

Government initiatives :

- Carpathian Declaration - representatives of: Poland, Hungary, Ukraine and Slovakia during the XXVIII Economic Forum in Krynica - September 5, 2018.
- Cyclical International Conference of the Europe of the Carpathians in Krasiczyn.
- Carpathian Executive Council - inaugural session - February 21, 2020.



Thank you for your attention