



# Macro-regional Strategy for the Carpathian Region



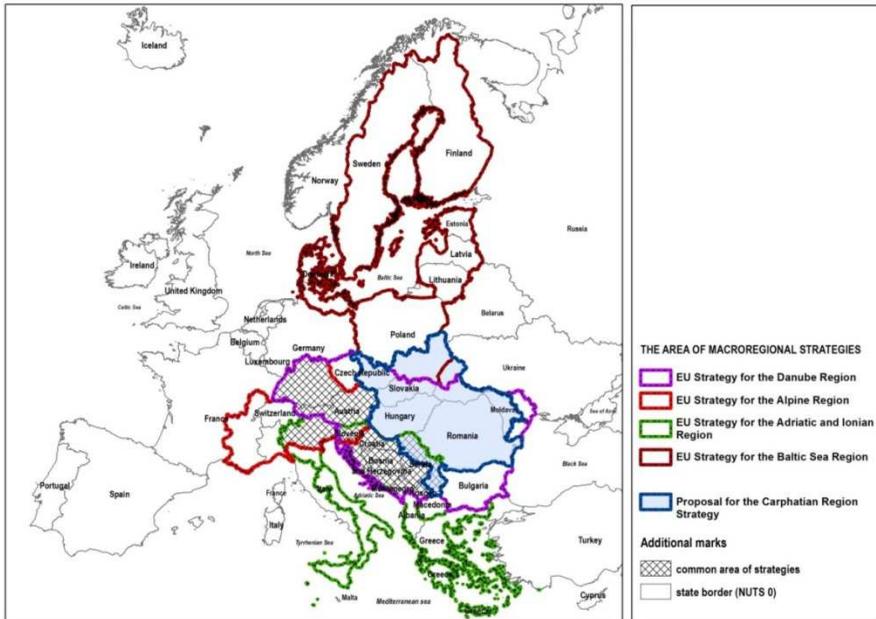
September 2018

## THE CARPATHIAN STRATEGY AS THE FIFTH MACRO-REGIONAL STRATEGY IN THE EU

At the moment there are **four macro-regional strategies functioning in the EU** dedicated to the following regions: Baltic Sea (2009), Danube (2011), Adriatic and Ionian Seas (2014) and the Alps (2015). The Macro-regional Strategy for the Carpathian Region would be the fifth macro-regional strategy in the EU.

Currently, **macro-regional strategies** become more and more important for the regional development policy of the EU. Planning and implementation of development policy at the macro-regional level, taking into account the specific character of the groups of countries or their regions and their specific potential and needs, gains new quality, both in the ongoing development management, as well as in planning the future EU budget and the post-2020 Cohesion Policy.

Map 1. The areas of the EU macro-regional strategies.



Source: Own elaboration.

Macro-regional strategies are a tool for effective coordination of activities, a catalyst for cooperation across administrative borders, and aim to strengthen local economies. The table below shows a general trend that the macro-regional strategies nowadays become more oriented on a few strategic measures rather than a wide range of different kind of priorities.

The concept of the Macro-regional Strategy for the Carpathian region will serve the objectives of **social, economic and territorial cohesion** complementing actions undertaken at national or

regional level, in particular by addressing the challenges and needs common to most or all regions of the strategic area.

Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region	Strategy for the Danube Region	Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region	Strategy for the Alpine Region	Strategy for the Carpathian Region
<b>11 countries</b> (8 EU countries, 3 non-EU)	<b>14 countries</b> (8 EU countries, 6 non-EU)	<b>8 countries</b> (4 EU countries, 4 non-EU)	<b>8 countries</b> (5 EU countries, 3 non-EU)	<b>8-9 countries</b> (5-6 EU countries, 3 non-EU)
17 thematic priorities	11 thematic priorities	4+2 thematic priorities	3 thematic priorities	3 thematic priorities
100 million people	115 million people	70 million people	70 million people	68 million people

The essential idea behind the development of the strategy for the Carpathians is to strengthen the role of Carpathian macro-region, so that it becomes one of the **Europe's centres**, instead of remaining a peripheral region. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to create mechanisms which allow for **full development of the potentials of the macro-region** and which facilitate its socio-economic development. This requires not only activities at the regional, national and supranational levels, but also skilful compilation and complementarity of the instruments used. The Carpathians, treated as a single transnational, diverse but coherent region, require their own strategic plan aimed at solving their specific complex economic, environmental, social and spatial problems. Therefore, there is a need of a coherent vision of their development and a mechanism of coordination at macro-regional level. A macro-regional strategy is a perfect instrument for coordinating efforts of all actors involved in the capacity building of the Carpathian region.

## CARPATHIANS – A UNIQUE AREA

The Carpathian Mountain Range covers an area of 190 000 km<sup>2</sup>, curving on the territory of Central and Eastern European countries and, after the Alps, it is the most extensive mountain system in Europe.

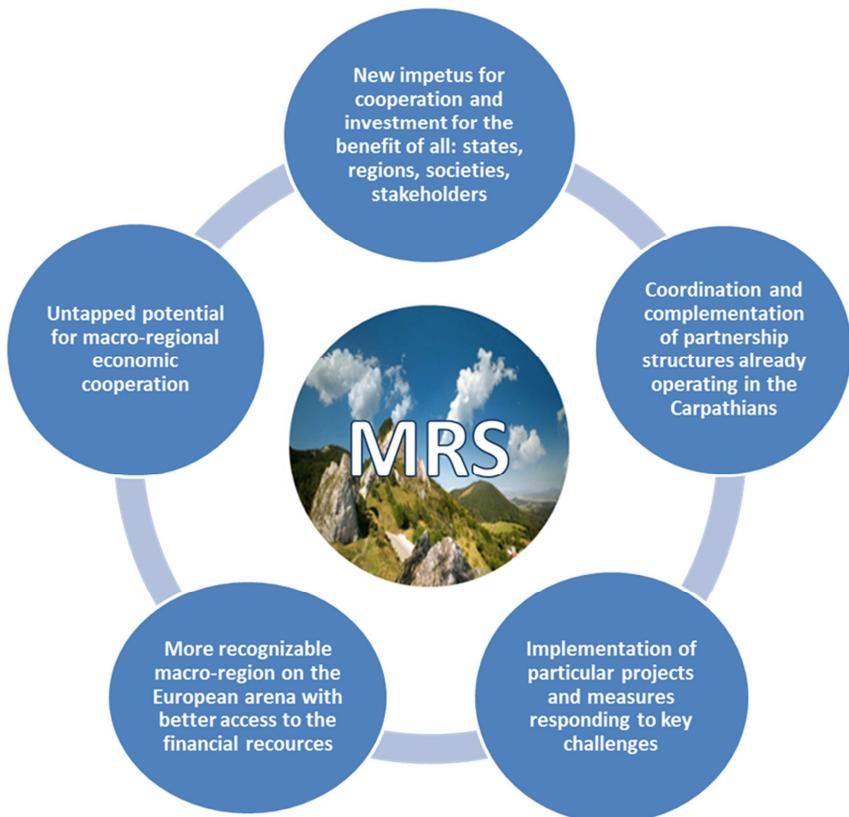
In the past, the **Carpathians used to be an important area of Europe**; a specific culture developed there, affected for example by historical and natural conditions. They were a destination at the times of migration of peoples, where different ethnic and national groups co-existed; an area that drew on its diversity. Today, it is commonly believed that the **Carpathians are more a barrier than a good place for the development**, that often the tragic history of this area is an obstacle, and that the common problems associated with the socio-economic development divide the countries and people of the Carpathians rather than unite them. A common challenge is to achieve a situation where **the Carpathians will again unite** instead of dividing and where the Carpathian cooperation will contribute to the integration of Europe in the spatial, political, social, and economic aspects.

## Macro-regional Strategy for the Carpathian Region

The Carpathians have **numerous development potentials** which – when properly used – may translate into its sustainable and dynamic growth. What is important, apart from potentials of universal value for the Carpathians, including the forests, clean natural environment and landscapes, cultural heritage and tourist attractiveness, each locality or region has its own specific potentials connected with the particular area. Cooperation in the scope of their use will contribute to achieving better benefits to the macro-region.

The Carpathians pose specific challenges, but also offer **unique cooperation potentials**. That is why the Carpathian Strategy should become a platform for cooperation for countries and regions involved in its implementation. It will ensure better interregional consultation when investing EU funds, more effective coordination of international initiatives, as well as it will bring together the inhabitants of the macro-region, which would help to erase existing historical conflicts.

### MACRO-REGIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE CARPATHIAN REGION



## PROPOSED GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE<sup>1)</sup> OF THE CARPATHIAN STRATEGY

- ✓ 4 regions in the **Czech Republic**: Moravskoslezsko, Strední Morava, Severovýchod, Jihovýchod,
- ✓ **Moldova**: whole country,
- ✓ 5 regions in **Poland**: Podkarpacie, Małopolskie, Lubelskie, Świętokrzyskie, Śląskie,
- ✓ **Romania**: whole country,
- ✓ 4 regions in **Serbia**: Belgrade, Vojvodina, South and East Serbia (Region Južne i Istočne Srbije)
- ✓ **Slovakia**: whole country,
- ✓ **Hungary**: whole country,
- ✓ 4 regions in **Ukraine**: Lviv, Zakarpattya, Ivano-Frankivsk, Chernivtsi.

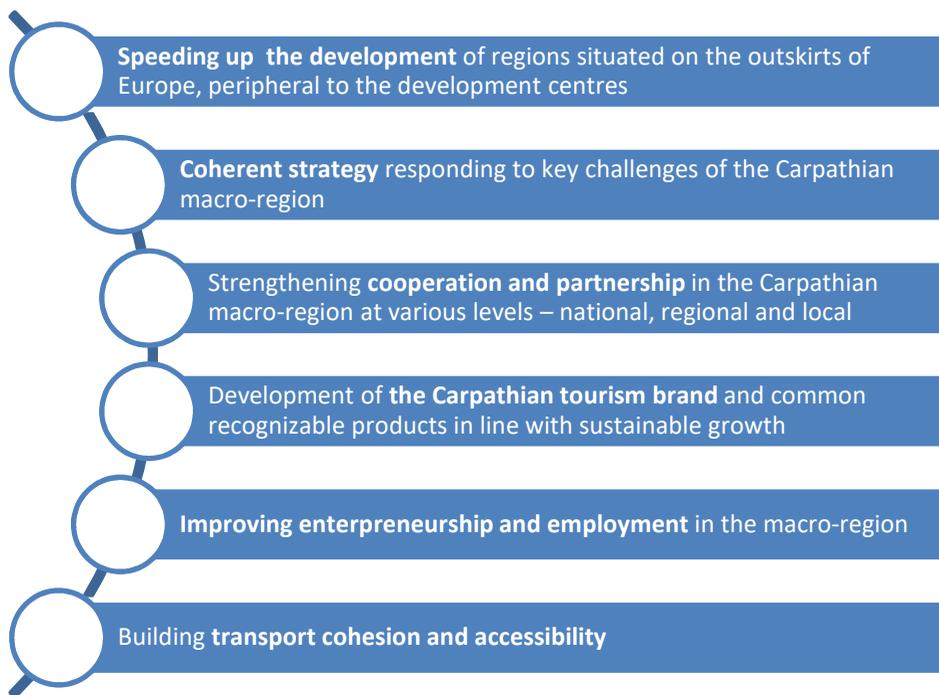
Map 2. Geographical scope of the Macro-regional Strategy for the Carpathian Region.



Source: Own elaboration.

<sup>1)</sup> Geographical scope of the Carpathian Strategy will depend on the decision of the respective countries

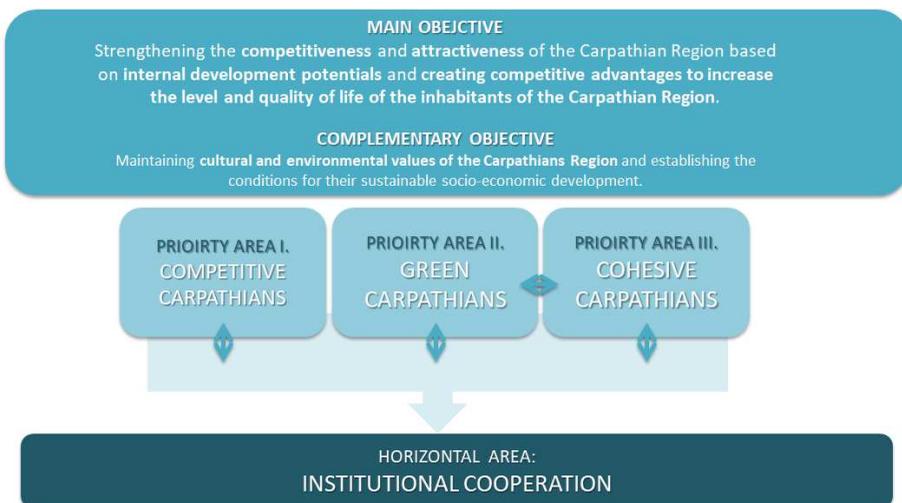
## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?



## CARPATHIAN STRATEGY - FOR WHOM?

An important aspect of the development strategy is to determine who will benefit from the positive changes resulting from the implementation of the strategic objectives.

The beneficiaries of the Carpathian Strategy will be mainly the **residents of the Carpathians and the people associated with the Carpathians**. The primary objective is to improve the quality of life of the residents and increase its level. Thus, the decision to start working on the Carpathian Strategy resulted from the diagnosis of the needs and problems faced by the population of the Carpathians and from the concept of systemic solution of these problems. In this context, the achievements of non-governmental organizations will be of use, while the representatives of the third sector will be involved both in the stage of formulating the objectives and targets of the strategy, as well as in its implementation.



The draft outline for the Macro-regional Strategy for the Carpathian Region has been prepared by Polish Ministry of Economic Development, based on conducted analysis referring to the socio-economic situation of the Carpathian macro-region and other available studies describing the Carpathian Mountains area. In line with the principle of an integrated approach to sustainable development, four main priority areas were defined:

### **PRIORITY AREA I: COMPETITIVE CARPATHIANS**

Strengthening economic collaboration in strategic macro-regional sectors: **clean industry, sustainable tourism and competitive agri-food sector** through development of the **Carpathian clusters, value chains** and **macro-regional innovation ecosystem**. Proposed actions should be focused on the effective use of local resources and joint potential of the Carpathian states and regions and enhance inclusion in the development of areas with less favourable social-economic conditions in order to improve the competitiveness of the macro-region.

### **PRIORITY AREA II: GREEN CARPATHIANS**

**Protection and preservation of natural environment** as well as implementation of educational activities which increase the ecological awareness of macro-region's population combined with promotion of ecological attitudes. The collaboration in the area of **preservation and protection of the cultural heritage** of the Carpathian area and development of a Carpathian regional brand will make the region a more attractive place and more often visited by tourists.

### **PRIORITY AREA III: COHESIVE CARPATHIANS**

**Improvement of accessibility of the Carpathian region** through implementation of the investments supporting the development of the network of roads, railways, ICT infrastructure and provision of e-services system for the population of the macro-region. Joint activities proposed within this area will help not just to open the region to the outside world, but will also lead to strengthening of its internal cohesion.

## **HORIZONTAL AREA: INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION**

An important element of comprehensive development of the Carpathian area concerns the domain of **spatial management and common functional connections** in the region. The quality of operation of the institutions, including local governments, is in many cases a determining factor of the quality of functional connections and therefore of the macro-region development perspectives. The area supports in its activities the Carpathian rural-urban collaboration and joint coordination of spatial planning management. The area also strengthens cross-border collaboration and security on the borders.

### **EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS**

- ✓ Carpathian Innovation Support Centre – supporting development of start-ups and laboratories operating e.g. in the field of bio-science, renewable energy and transport,
- ✓ Carpathian Platform for Technology Transfer – development of ICT products connected with the industry, tourism or services of general nature (applications, data mining etc.),
- ✓ Common early warning system for all natural hazards,
- ✓ Carpathian incubator of “green industries”,
- ✓ Development of new technologies for energy generation,
- ✓ The Via Carpathia Corridor – more effective inclusion of Carpathian Mountains into the European transport and Baltic-Adriatic Corridor,
- ✓ Intermodality – effective integration of cross-border railway connections with public communication in the Carpathian countries area,
- ✓ Medium and small Carpathian cities cooperation networks,
- ✓ Creating a common tourism brand and tourism product for the Carpathian macro-region,
- ✓ Cross-border spatial development concepts in functional areas of the Carpathians.

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