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The Carpathian (Euro)Region

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Abstract:

The Carpathian (Euro)Region is one of more than a hundred transborder cooperation frameworks and arrangements in Europe. It was the first euroregion established exclusively by Eastern European countries; it is formed by 10-15 participating regions, covers an area of about 100 thousand km² and has a population of more than 10 million people. Its history, its conflicts and its fate show typical problems and results in transborder cooperation in Eastern Europe.

Zusammenfassung:

Die Karpaten-Euroregion ist eine von mehr als hundert grenzüberschreitenden Kooperationen in Europa. Diese Euroregion war die erste, welche ausschließlich von osteuropäischen Staaten ins Leben gerufen wurde; sie besteht aus 10-15 teilnehmenden Regionen, umfaßt eine Fläche von rund 100.000 km² und hat eine Bevölkerung von mehr als 10 Millionen Menschen. Ihre Geschichte, ihre Konflikte und ihr Schicksal zeigen typische Probleme und Ergebnisse einer grenzüberschreitenden Kooperation in Osteuropa.

The Carpathian (Euro)Region

On the 13th of February 1993 the foreign ministers of Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and the Ukraine with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Mme Catherine Lalumière met in the city of Debrecen in North-eastern Hungary to sign a document declaring the establishment of the Carpathian Euroregion. The process of creating this transborder cooperation was intensively assisted by the Institute of East-West Studies in New York. Without this external assistance the Euroregion wouldn't have come to life at all.

The Carpathian Euroregion is one of more than a hundred transborder cooperation frameworks and arrangements in Europe. However, it is worth considering for two reasons: First because it was the first euroregion established exclusively by Eastern European countries; not a customary euroregion formed by two neighbouring countries along a sector of restricted length the common border, but by 10-15 participating regions from the beginning and comprising an area of about 100 thousand km², and a population of more than 10 million. And second because its history, its conflicts and its fate are very typical of the region it reflects; like a drop of water taken from the ocean all problems, all conflicts and hindrances are involved in Eastern Europe when one tries to promote transborder cooperation.

1. The main peculiarities of the region

The Carpathian Region is peculiar from several points of view:

a) There are no more than two spots on earth where, within a circle of 60 km radius, the territory of 5 countries can be reached. The first one is around Darjeeling in India, covering the territories of India, China, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan; the second one is around Mukatschewo in Transcarpathia (Ukraine) where the territories of Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Rumania and the Ukraine are comprised. This geographical intimacy offers a unique opportunity for multilateral cooperation.

b) It is not only geography which connects and integrates the area. The other reason is history. From the end of the 18th century until 1918 the whole area was part of the Habsburg Monarchy within the Kingdom of Galicia and Volodimiria, the Principality of Bukowina, the Kingdom of Hungary and the Grand-Duchy of Transsylvania. These 140 years constitute a very important period of the area's history. It was the time when the basic infrastructure networks - railways, roads, waterways, post and telecommunications - were established; when administrative, educational, banking and fiscal systems emerged as an integral network connecting all parts of the region and creating a uniform system throughout the whole area.

c) The years after 1914 reveal the other face of the region's history. Small states hostile to each other dominated a region, which had been the fiercest battlefield of WWI, changing occupation three times, followed by civil wars in large parts of the region. In WW II again large areas changed masters several times. Ethnic cleansing, expulsion and the Holocaust took a huge tolls of victims in the area. In recent years ethnic and religious tensions have revived, though not as acutely as in Bosnia. Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union have disintegrated. The stormy history of the 20th century is reflected by the fact that, for example Eastern Galicia - the present Western Ukraine - changed its rulers seven times within this century (until 1918 Austria, 1918-20 the independent Ukraine, 1920-1939 Poland, 1939-41 the Soviet Union, 1941-44 Germany, 1944-1991 the Soviet Union again, 1992 the Ukraine).

d) At present, underdevelopment and poverty are the most striking common features in the Carpathian Euregion. The areas belonging to it are the most peripheral and the least industrialised ones in all five countries, struggling with high unemployment and showing only limited progress in economic transition. Poverty is not the most attractive driving force for cooperation, but nevertheless a common appeal can perhaps attract more attention to their problems.

2. Population, society and politics

a) Because official membership is very volatile, changing from year to year it is difficult to define the Carpathian Regions as simply the group of regions which signed the agreement. Originally 5 Hungarian counties joined the community; two of them have left since. Initially one, later two, and then three Rumanian counties were given observer's status until the central government revoked it. Originally one and later three more Ukrainian regions joined. The present situation is not very clear.

It is better to define an area which comprises the potential (past, present or future) participants in Carpathian Region cooperation independently of their present official status. This is influenced partly by central government policy, but also by the financial situation, namely whether they are able to pay the membership fee or not; in many cases they are not. According to this delineation for analytic - and hopefully for future practical purposes - the Carpathian Region comprises:

- 5 Ukrainian regions (Transcarpathia, Lviv, Ivano-Frankivs, Tshernivtsi and Ternopol) in which 70,4 thousand km² and 7,5 million inhabitants. This area comprises the former Eastern Galicia, Northern Bukowina and Transcarpathia.
- 3 Hungarian counties (Borsod-Abauj-Zemplén, Hajdú-Bihar and Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg): 19,3 thousand km² and 1,86 million inhabitants.
- 5 Polish woiwodships (Krosno, Nowi S'cz, Tarnów, Rzeszów and Przemysl) 24,3 thousand km² and 3 million inhabitants (the former Western Galicia with the exception of Kraków and its environment).
- the former Eastern Slovakian region comprising 13 districts, 16,2 thousand km² and 1,5 million inhabitants.
- 6 Romanian counties (Bihar, Satu-Mare, Sălaj, Maramure^o, Bistrița-Năsăud, Suceava).

The whole region has an area of 166,1 km² and a population of 16,8 million.

By looking at the demographic characteristics, a sharp contradiction can be observed: The Carpathian Region has been and is even now one of the areas with the highest natural reproduction rates in Europe. At present natural increase is 4,7 per thousand population. There is

only one other area in Europe with an even higher indicator, the Albania-Macedonia-Kosovo-Montenegro-region. Within the 5 respective countries the regions belonging to the Carpathian Region have the highest birth rates and natural increase indicators.

At the same time the Region is characterized by one of the lowest overall population growth rates in Europe in the twentieth century. Between 1910 and 1992 the total population of the region increased by 37 per cent. The population increase in the same period in the Netherlands was 155 per cent, in Spain 97, in Switzerland 92, Denmark 92, even in France 45 per cent and in the United Kingdom 38 per cent. Growth rates lower than that in the Carpathian Region are experienced only in Austria and in the Czech Republic. The contradiction can be explained by migration movements, wartime genocide and expulsions.

Within the second half of the last and in the first half of the present century this area was one of the principal originating areas of overseas emigration in Europe. Between 1870 and 1920, approximately 2,4 million of its people emigrated.

Following Ireland, Sweden and Italy, it had the fourth largest emigration rate of this period in Europe. Nearly 20 per cent of the population left the area. The highest emigration rates were found within the ethnic groups of Slovaks, Germans and Jews.

The principal cause of population loss, however, was World War II and its aftermath. More than 1 million of the Jewish population perished in the Holocaust. 1,3 million Poles were resettled to the new Western Regions of Poland from the region that was once Eastern Galicia and became Western Ukraine. More than a hundred thousand Polish people died during the war or were deported to Siberia or other Eastern Regions of the Soviet Union. The wartime human loss of the Ukrainian population also exceeded a million and nearly 200 thousand Ukrainians were resettled from Southeast Poland to the North and to the West. The ethnic German population of 0,45 million totally disappeared.

Summing up, during the 82 years between 1910 and 1992 approximately 13 million people emigrated voluntarily, were expelled from or killed in the Carpathian Region. One can certainly say that the region is thus one with a tragic history.

These events and movements did not leave the ethnic and religious composition of the population untouched. The main feature of these was a reduction within the ethnic diversity; more homogenous ethnic structures emerged within the individual countries.

In 1910 the largest ethnic group in the region had been that of the Poles (32,9%), closely followed by the Ukrainians (31,7%). A significant part of the population was also Hungarian (18,9%); Rumanian (7,8%), Slovak (3,6%) and German (3,6%) were the other represented ethnic groups.

In 1992 the majority role was taken over by Ukrainians (40%). The number and share of Poles has been substantially reduced. There is a slight reduction in the proportion of Hungarians (15,1%), while the share of Rumanians (14,8%) and Slovaks (7,9%) increased significantly. There appeared a new ethnic group, Russians, in Western Ukraine (2,3%, 400,000), while the Germans practically disappeared.

The shifts in religious composition were even more striking. In 1910, the largest religion was Roman Catholic (37%), followed by the Greek Catholic (Uniate) Church (35,1%) the third largest religious group was the Jewish people (10%), followed by the Calvinists (8,6%) and the Eastern Orthodox Church (6,7%).

In 1992 it is rather still difficult to collect reliable data about religion. However, the largest Church in the region is the Eastern Orthodox one with an increasing number of adherents due to Russian and Romanian immigration and forced conversion from the Greek Catholic Church (which after 1947 was banned in all countries of the region except Hungary). Next to the Eastern Orthodox Church is the Roman Catholic one. The Greek Catholic Church is now reviving after decades of illegality; it is one of the most unique elements of life in the Carpathian Region. Of the number 5 million Greek orthodox believers in the World 4 million (80%) live in the Carpathian Region, and they are represented in all 5 countries in the region. There are perhaps the most important element of Western Ukrainian identity.

Religion is still, however, a very important factor in this region. Due to the fact that the Western Ukraine was annexed (in 1939 and in 1945), after the great atheist and church-destruction campaigns in the Soviet Union, in the 1970s 40% of all the working churches of the whole Soviet Union were to be found in the Western Ukraine, though its population share was a mere 2,8%.

Underdevelopment, nationalism and religion: these factors determine the political attitudes of the region even more than they affected other regions of the respective countries. Different types of extremism can find a more fertile soil here than in more civilized and urbanized areas.

Inhabitants of South East Poland are the most traditionalist in the country. They vote for Catholic Movements and for the Peasant Party. The left-wing national majority had hardly any votes there. Eastern Slovakia is, on the other hand, the base of left-wing and Socialist, even of Communist parties, while the nationalist movements, so strong in Western Slovakia, have hardly any impact in the East. Political differentiation in Hungary is less marked. Both left-wing socialist and right-wing nationalist parties have a better than average position in North-East Hungary. One could say that liberal parties are overall very weak.

In Romania, the ruling and governing party (The Democratic Front of National Salvation) won hardly any mandates in the counties belonging to the Carpathian Region. The mandates are shared among two national movements (the Party of Rumanian National Unity, and the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania) and the opposition Democratic Convention.

The present ruling parties have hardly any support in the Western Ukraine. It is the base of Ukrainian nationalist and anti-Communist (anti-Russian) movements. At the last presidential elections they almost unanimously supported Leonid Kravchuk against the winner, Leonid Kuchma, because Kravchuk was regarded less Russophile than Kuchma.

In four out of the five countries - with the exception of Hungary - the opposition holds a majority in the Carpathian Regions. This fact doesn't strengthen their case for favoured treatment in national economic and social policy.

Economic situation and problems

As a whole, the Carpathian Region in each country is less developed and less industrialized than the average of the respective countries. Three areas are exceptions to this rule.

The first one is the industrial region in and around the city of Lviv. Coal mining areas and oil fields are joined by large chemical and engineering agglomerations.

- The second one is a traditional heavy industrial region on both sides of the Hungarian-Slovak border, where a large part of Slovak and Hungarian metallurgic industry is concentrated (Košice, Miskolc, Ózd, Krompachy). Restructuring has been a great challenge in both countries, with Slovakia apparently following a more successful management strategy.

The third important industrial centre is around Tarnów and Rzeszów in Poland.

But in general the Carpathian Region is more agricultural than industrial. Agricultural employment in the region is higher than the national average in all five countries. In fact the region has always had a large agricultural labour force surplus during its history. Its agricultural population density was second only to Italy in the first half of this century and is now the highest in Europe. The region is largely a mountain and forested area and therefore arable land is rather restricted, which makes its problems even more crucial.

However, along with these common characteristics, there are striking differences in the agriculture of the region. In the Ukraine, despite weak natural endowments, the region's productivity per hectare is the highest in the whole country. This is exclusively due to the large labour input and more favourable skills and working attitudes among the agricultural population. This difference can be explained by history. Agriculture in other parts of the Ukraine suffered under Stalin, in the 1930's, when a tremendous human loss forced the surviving rural population to flee from the villages. This experience was spared to the Western Ukraine as it was not then part of the Soviet Union. However, in spite of this high physical and intellectual labour input, Western Ukraine's productivity per agricultural worker and its level of agricultural incomes is low because of the lack of land and the surplus of labour.

In Slovakia, Hungary and Romania productivity and agricultural income in the areas belonging to the Carpathian region are lower than the national average. However labour endowments have enabled the development of intensive agricultural culture of some vegetables, fruits, vineyards and tobacco. The famous Tokay wine is produced in the region (in Hungary and in Slovakia). Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county in Hungary has been the largest apple exporter in the world for years.

- In the northern part of the Polish Carpathian Region (Rzeszów and Tarnów voivodships) the intensity of agriculture is not so high as in Central Poland, but more or less satisfactory. In the South (Krosno, Przemyśl voivodships) where the original Ukrainian peasantry was evacuated and resettled 50 years ago, there are still under-utilised and depopulated agricultural areas.

- In all five countries' mountainous areas pastures are abundant and dairy production is relatively highly developed providing a high proportion of national production, but mechanisation of agriculture in the whole region - in every country - is lower than national average.

The role and importance of industry is lower in the region than in the respective countries' total employment and production. The most important factors influencing industrial structure are the following:

- The Carpathian Region is poor in energy and fuel resources. The main coal mining area is in the Ukraine (the Lviv-Volhynia basin), but its productivity is one third of that of the Donets basin. The Hungarian coal mines of the region are now being closed down.

- The Galician oil wells were regarded at the beginning of this century as the most important ones in Europe. Today their production is declining; they are - both in the Ukraine and in Poland - nearing depletion.

The region potentially is rich in water energy. However, the rivers carrying this potential are mostly border rivers and the exploitation of these potentials requires stable international cooperation.

There is no nuclear energy plant in the region. Along its borders, however, there are ones like Paks and Chernobyl.

Iron works plants can be found in Slovakia and Hungary, but the Hungarian mills are closing down, along with those in Slovakia except for that at Košice one. Consequently Košice will be the only metallurgical production location in the whole region, having relatively favourable technical and economic parameters. A smaller aluminium works be found at Oradea in Romania.

The most important industry of the region is chemicals. A petrochemical complex connects three countries (Ukraine, Slovakia, Hungary) with fuel and petrochemical product pipelines, enabling a flexible exchange and flow of intermediary products. It is vitally important to maintain this system in the present critical. The pharmaceutical plants of the region in Hungary could be also of vital importance for the medicine supply of the Ukraine, which is currently in crisis.

Although a disadvantage in the past it might now be an advantage for the region that defense industries were not located here, but in other areas of the respective countries. This is especially important in Ukraine, Slovakia and Romania where the national economy has been heavily affected by the situation of the defense industries. In Poland and Hungary, however, defense industries are more represented in the region.

There are many engineering plants in the region with similar profiles (bus factories in Lviv and Sanok, 120 km from each other, automation apparel plants in Lviv and Presov, three roller-bearings' plants in Debrecen, Hungary; Prešov, Slovakia and Krasnik, Poland).

These are located relatively close to each other, but still so separate that closer cooperation could be and should be established.

Since a large part of the region is covered with forest, wood and furniture industries are basic to its economic structure (more than 60 per cent of Ukrainian wood production is located in the Carpathians). The Carpathian Region's share of the world's furniture exports is about 13-

14%. However competition between the countries is very keen. The leading furniture exporter in the region in the 1980 s was Romania; now it has been overtaken by Poland.

In the past 6-7 years, economic recession has led to decline among the countries of the Carpathian Region. Due to the distinctive economic structure, remarkably different from the respective countries' national averages, the decline in the Carpathian Region has been not so severe than in the more industrialised parts, save in Hungary, whose Carpathian Region has been most hit by recession. But existing underdevelopment, even when combined with a milder than average decline have created a very critical economic situation. Unemployment is everywhere at a very high level. Ukrainian figures are not very reliable in this respect, but in the other countries it is about 15-20%, while the respective national averages are about 10%. One of the reasons for high unemployment is the formerly underemployed agricultural population squeezed out through land privatisation. The gypsy population is in all parts of the region higher than national average and this ethnic group has been a major loser by economic transition.

The volume of investment has always been lower in the region than in other parts of the countries, and this tendency has been reinforced in the last 6 years. But again it has to be emphasised that the previously low income level of industrial investment in the region may prove to be an advantage for the future by saving the area from the disastrous economic and environmental consequences of former industrial policies.

Income and consumption levels are also lower in the Carpathian Region than in other parts of the countries, with disparities increasing. Two additional remarks are, however, required here.

The first one is that this low income level is not - or at least not always and not everywhere - reflected in differences of per capita retail trade turnover. This phenomenon can be explained by cross-border trade and smuggling. A large number of people earn their living by exploiting the price and exchange rate distortions which still exist - buying and selling goods on each side of the border can be quite profitable. Consequently retail trade turnover of borderside areas does not depend on local purchasing power but on rather volatile price and exchange rate relations.

The second point is that infrastructural conditions are generally better in the Regions.

The heritage of the Habsburg monarchy is a prime reason for that (road and rail network density in Galicia, Transsylvania and Transcarpathia was and still is higher than in Old-Romania and in areas of the former Russian Empire). The second reason is that houses and communal facilities have been built mainly from local or private resources. They are of better quality than buildings with state construction origins. 'Private' houses are more spacious and the neighbourhoods are less deteriorated than urban industrial centers.

The Carpathian Region is not so far a favoured location for foreign direct investment. Only a very small fraction of the foreign capital invested in the respective countries has been allocated to it. The long distance from the capitals is a big disadvantage. No single big investment project with foreign capital participation has yet been implemented in the region.

Privatisation and private entrepreneurship is also proportionately less intensive.

There are, however, sectoral and regional differences. Land and agricultural privatisation in the Carpathian Regions is more advanced, for example. The reasons are different. This mountainous area and low quality soil has always been inadequate for large scale farming, consequently state farms were less represented in this area and co-operatives immediately collapsed. Secondly "black-market" unregistered entrepreneurship is flourishing. Thirdly entrepreneurship in retail trade is also above average partly due to opportunities offered by cross-border trade and smuggling, and as a living of last resort. These "trade enterprises" are generally low profit or loss-making and they usually close after a short time, but new people are always trying to make a profit in this business.

The institutions of the Euroregion and the role of central and local governments

The possibilities of cross-border cooperation largely depend on the attitudes of central and local governments to it.

1) In this part of Europe local governments do not yet have the autonomy and competency of their counterparts in Western Europe. The overwhelming part of their financial means is transferred from central budgets. Parallel to elected local governments there are strong central government branch offices in the counties. In several countries (Poland, Slovakia) elected local governments exist only on local but not on regional level. Their competencies are especially weak or non-existent in terms of external policy, planning and development.

2) It is no wonder under these circumstances that the fate of any specific cross-border cooperation agreement depends decisively on central government administrations.

The respective attitudes and interests of the respective five central governments on this specific matter differ to a very great extent.

The most intensive interest is shown by the government of the Ukraine. It is a newly independent country which seeks to establish international contacts on every level. They seek to counterbalance their relations with Russia by opening to Western neighbours. At the time of signing the foundation document, the Carpathian region was the first formally, institutionalised integration scheme outside the CIS that the Ukraine had the opportunity to join.

There was initially intensive interest from Hungary as well. Its relations with many of its neighbours (Serbs, Slovaks, Romanians) were rather tense, so that through this cooperation Hungarians sought to improve those relations. In addition, the Carpathian Euroregion offered an opportunity to establish Hungarian-Hungarian relations (outside with extra-national Hungarians in Slovakia, Ukraine and Romania), which was and is a principal objective of Hungarian governments.

The Polish government showed a benevolent attitude towards cooperation, though their interest was not as intensive. They have generally neighbourhood relations in every direction

principally; perhaps their most thorning problems exist with this relations towards the Ukraine. But their basic interest is attached to their western borders this being the direction from where financial support can be expected. Poland's regions belonging to the Carpathian region constitute only 5-7 per cent of its population, which makes them of peripheral importance.

The attitudes of the Slovak and Romanian governments have been the most critical ones towards this cooperation. They are of course interested in international cooperation, but at the same time they regard any initiatives promoted by Hungary and to do with crossborder cooperation as an attempt to destabilise or at least to question their borders. Their justifications of rejecting the proposal to join may be different, but the main reason is the participation of Hungary. On the other hand the establishment of cooperation in the Carpathians around Hungary, but without Hungary, would be nothing else than the re-establishment of the "little-Entente" of the interwar years, which is unacceptable not only for Hungary but also for Ukraine and Poland. So Slovakia decided to assume only observer status, while Romania rejected the proposal.

3.) The relationship between central and local governments is also different within the individual countries. This has also affected the creation and institutionalisation of the Carpathian Euroregion.

In Poland voivods (presidents of voivodships) are nominated by the central government. Bodies on voivodship level are of advisory and of non-decision-making character, so initiatives at central and regional level accord with to each other in most cases. There is no autonomy on regional level.

Slovakia's case is similar. After 1990 regions (*krajy*) were abolished and only districts (*okresy*) survived. These are only administrative units of central government with no autonomous decision-making competencies. This fact served the Slovakian government as justification for the withdrawal from the Carpathian Euroregion government: districts did not have the right and competency to join this organisation. The administrative reform in Slovakia, as a

result of which new counties will be established with autonomous competencies, is still in preparation.

In Hungary, the problem was not so much the relationship between central and regional governments but rather between regional and local governments. There exist elected regional governments at county level, with considerable autonomy from central government. However, their competencies in relation to local governments are rather restricted. Regional governments are not entitled to act, to make agreements or to join any organization on behalf of the local (city and village) governments. This fact significantly limits the county governments' field of action in external relations.

Undoubtedly there were also tensions between central and regional governments as well. The central government has established a regional administrative network of its own by nominating so-called republic's commissioners. Central government also wanted the international regional cooperation to be managed by these commissioners and not by regional elected governments (which were mostly run by the opposition at that time).

In Romania's counties (judet) elected county governments and nominated state administrations (prefects) exist in parallel. The county governments' international competency is very restricted, however. Originally two Romanian judets joined the Carpathian "Euroregion" with "observer status"; but the ministry of foreign affairs ordered them to withdraw.

In the Ukraine at the time of establishing the Carpathian Euroregion, regional governments' autonomy was very restricted. Most of the local power was centralised in the hands of "presidential commissioners" nominated by the president of the republic. But this situation has been changed substantially. During the last presidential and parliamentary elections - as an element of the political struggle - the position of presidential commissioners was abolished and all competencies transferred to the elected chairmen of regional governments. At present, Ukrainian regional governments have the largest autonomy and competency among the five countries. This structure is, however, hardly stable. In these new countries administrative and jurisdictional structures are not deeply rooted in tradition and constitution; they are

used rather as instruments of political struggle and consequently are exposed to sudden and radical changes.

4.) Considering the ambiguous attitude of the central governments, the lack of power and competence of the regional governments and adding to it the sometimes hostile and jealous attitude of regional governments towards each other within the same country, an 'outsider' third party was indispensable creating the preconditions for institutionalising the Carpathian Euroregion. This role had been performed by the Institute of East West Studies located in New York, which has also raised the necessary financial funds to start the operations and maintain a minimum level of financing, coming from Sasakawa and Rockefeller Foundation sources.

5.) The Euroregion has now a permanent Secretariat in Ushgorod in the Ukraine (previously the seat of the secretariat rotated biannually from country to country). The location of Ushgorod has the advantage of lying geographically in the center, of being in the largest country devoted to the idea of a Carpathian Euroregion, and of being a multi-ethnic city inhabited by Ukrainians, Russians, Hungarians and Slovaks. It has the disadvantage of lacking communicational and telecommunicational infrastructure, of being in a country where border-crossing is an exercise requiring between a minimum of 5-6 hours and as much as 12 hours.

The Euroregion has a Board composed of two members from each country, regardless of how many administrative units have joined the Euroregion from the respective country. The Board and Secretariat have organised several conferences for different expert groups, in different topics and at different locations. The Euroregion has a Fund and a Fundadministration in each country. The Fund finances different development and cooperation projects joined by local governments, universities, and chambers of commerce in the region.

The main deficiency of the region's operations and activities is that it has been restricted so far mainly to the spheres of central and local government organisations. At present the Board is making great efforts to involve the entrepreneurial groups in this cooperation. Of course, there is entrepreneurial cross-border cooperation in the Carpathian Euroregion, but it takes

place mainly in the black, or "gray" sphere of economy, and its actors do not always wish to participate in public and official organisations.

Another problem is that the participating local or regional governments sometimes do not dispose over the minimal financial means to pay their membership fees in the Euroregion. Ukrainian regions are totally unable to pay, and so frequently are the Hungarian counties as well. Polish voivodships are the only regular fee-payers.

The fields of possible co-operation

There are immense possibilities in the region of which a small fraction has been utilized so far.

1. The priority field is transport and telecommunication

During the time of the Habsburg monarchy the area of the Carpathian Euroregion has been interconnected by a unified railway and road network. A large part of these - now cross-border - transport connections are at present out of use.

- the principal express railway line from Vienna and Budapest to the capital of the Kingdom of Galicia: Lemberg (Lviv) is now cut by 6 borders (Austria-Hungary, Hungary-Slovakia, Slovakia-Poland, Poland-Ukraine, back to Poland and again back to the Ukraine). In Polish and Ukrainian territory it is out of use and on the Slovak-Polish border the rails have been removed;
- the principal express railway line from Vienna and Budapest, to the Principality of Bukovina: Tschernovicz (Tshernivtsi) is cut by 5 borders (Austria-Hungary, Hungari-Romania, Romania-Ukraine, back to Romania and again back to the Ukraine). These railway lines could be reconstructed by reasonable inputs and in this case Lviv and Tshernivtsi could be reached by normal-gauge railway. (Lviv is 95 km, Tshernivtsi 35 km from the border).

Ukrainian borders with its neighbours countries are the connecting points of European normal and broad gauge railway systems. In the past, when huge amounts of raw materials were

transported from the Soviet Union to Comecon countries gigantic transshipment capacity was developed at those meeting points. The Ukrainian border station of Tshop, together with its Slovak and Hungarian counterparts (Eierna nad Tisou and Záhony), constituted the world's largest "continental port", where more than 60.000 railway workers were employed within the three countries. Today cross-border transport and re-loading requirement has shrunk to between a third and a quarter of its former volume, making underutilized labour and underutilized infrastructure serious problems. Here again, one can see the opportunity to create a large three-country entrepreneurial zone in this area.

The number of border-crossings is very limited in the region. In 1910 - when international borders didn't exist within it - altogether 58 roads and 20 rail lines connected the areas now belonging to different countries. Today there are only 11 rail and 11 road border-crossings, 47 road connections and 9 rail connections have been broken. This hermetic sealing off happened when the official policy was of "friendship and brotherhood". The negative record is represented by the Romanian-Ukrainian border where on a 600 km long border section there is only one rail and one road crossing. The number of road border-crossings should be at least tripled in the next couple of years. The shortage is one of the main reasons for the very long - sometimes more than 24 hours - waiting time at some Ukrainian borders.

The telecommunication connections are also in bad shape. Telephone connection between cities lying 20 km from each other can be established only through Budapest and Kiev, lying 1300 km from each other.

The region is a mountainous area, so TV stations have a limited broadcasting area. Therefore, to reach ethnic groups living outside their national home country by broadcasting needs international cooperation.

2. Environmental problems

Most rivers of the region (Theiß, Weichsel, Dniester, San) take their source in the Carpathian Mountains. Due to large-scale deforestation in the 1950's and even later, the danger of floods

in lower territories (the Great Hungarian Plain and the Plain of Sandomierz in Poland) increased considerably. Avoiding it requires coordinated water management throughout the area.

The Carpathian Mountain Range and especially its border areas are the locations of some of the rarest biotopes in Europe. In the framework of the Carpathian Euroregion one of Europe's most precious bioservations has been established at the three-country border of Slovakia, Poland and the Ukraine.

The air pollution situation is different in the individual countries. In Slovakia and in Hungary the Carpathian region is the area with the heaviest air pollution; considering, however, that westbound is the dominant wind direction, the surface of the polluted area is larger, also requiring international coordinated action.

3. Tourism and cultural relations

In Slovakia and in Poland the Carpathian Region is one of the most touristed areas. The High Tatras can be found here, but beside the High Tatras the so-called "Slovak Paradise", and the Eastern Beschides (Biescady) are also much-frequented. In Hungary, in the Ukraine and in Romania there are also places with high touristic value but mainly of domestic character. Linking together those areas and making visits easier would increase their overall incomes from tourism.

In Hungary, Poland and Romania the architectural value of monuments in this region is not as high as in other areas of the respective countries. Slovakia, however, has the old towns of Spiš (Zips), with some of its most precious architectural treasures, and in the Ukraine, more than 90% of the architectural monuments of the whole country can be found in the Western Ukraine.

The most precious objects of (rural) architecture in villages of all five countries are located in the region. It is the most famous area of popular arts and handicrafts as well. The Carpathian

Region as a whole represents a huge village museum of East-Central Europe's folklore art, handicraft and peasant architecture.

Three universities had been established in the region before the first world war: Lviv (Lemberg), Tshernirtsi (Tschernowitz) and Debrecen. Since that time two more have been added: Košice and Ushgorod. Technical Universities are located in Rzeszów and Miskolc. There are colleges and university faculties in all the other major cities. The largest cultural and scientific center of the region is undoubtedly Lviv (Lemberg), with more than 800 thousand inhabitants, 20 higher educational institutions and more than 50 scientific research centers. Once it was really the cultural centre of the area. Today however, to perform this role in an area fragmented by borders is much more difficult.

One can ask, what can result from an integration of these poor regions? Poverty added to poverty is unlikely to produce any fortune.

The answer is that a common effort can perhaps attract more attention to the problems of the region. The region has the endowments on which a self-sustaining growth could be based once the initial support has been given. Moreover some measures - for example the removal of political, economic and technical obstacles to cross-border connection - could create more favourable conditions for development, even under present circumstances.

APPENDIX:

The Carpathian Region

Number on the map	Region	Area (100 km ²)	Population (1000)	Population density/km ²
	Ukraine			
1	Transcarpathia	12,8	1 252,0	93,8
2	Lviv	21,8	2 748,0	126,3
3	Ivano-Frankivsk	13,9	1 423,0	103,0
4	Ternopil	13,8	1 169,0	84,9
5	Tshernivtsi	8,1	938,0	115,9
	From the Ukraine	70,4	7 530,0	107,0
	Its Share from the Ukraine	11,7%	14,6%	-
	Its Share from the Carpathian Region	42,4%	44,8%	-
	Slovakia			
6	Bardejov	1,0	79,0	78
7	Humenné	1,9	112,0	59
8	Košice	1,8	334,2	186
9	Michalovce	1,3	111,3	85
10	Poprad	2,0	154,0	78
11	Prešov	1,4	200,3	141
12	Rožava	1,6	86,2	53
13	Spišská Nová Ves	1,5	145,5	95
14	Stará Ľubovňa	0,6	46,5	74
15	Svidník	0,9	44,2	51
16	Trebišov	1,3	118,9	90
17	Vranov nad Topľou	0,8	73,4	87
	From Slovakia	16,2	1 505,5	92,9
	Its Share from Slovakia	33,0%	28,5%	-
	Its Share from the Carpathian Region	9,8%	9,0%	-
	Poland			
18	Krosno	5,7	501,7	88
19	Nowy S'cz	5,6	716,2	128
20	Tarnów	4,2	683,4	165
21	Rzeszów	4,4	735,3	167
22	Przemysł	4,4	411,5	93
	From Poland	24,3	3 048,1	125,4
	Share in Poland	7,8%	7,9%	-
	Share in The Carpathian Region	14,6%	18,1%	-

Number on the map	Region	Area (100 km ²)	Population (1000)	Population density/km ²
	Hungary			
23	Hajdú-Bihar	6,2	549,7	89
24	Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg	5,9	563,5	95
25	Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén	7,2	749,0	103
	From Hungary	19,3	1862,2	96,5
	Share in Hungary	20,8%	18,1%	-
	Share in the Carpathian Region	11,6%	11,1%	-
	Romania			
26	Bihor	7,5	634,1	84,2
27	Satu Mare	4,4	400,2	90,8
28	Sălaj	3,9	266,3	69,2
29	Maramures	6,2	538,5	86,7
30	Bistrița-Năsăud	5,3	327,2	61,7
31	Suceava	8,6	700,8	81,9
	From Romania	35,9	2867,1	79,9
	Share in Romania	15,1%	12,1%	-
	Share in the Carpathian Region	21,6%	17,0%	-
	Five counties total	1295,9	12 9040,0	99,6
	Carpathian Region total	166,1	1 6812,9	101,2
	Share of the Carpathian Region in the total of the 5 counties	12,8%	13,0%	-

**Population growth in the European countries and in the Carpathian Region
1910-1992**

Country	Population (in millions)		change
	1910	1992	%
Netherlands	6,0	16,30	+155
Spain	19,9	39,10	+97
Bulgaria	4,3	8,50	+97
Switzerland	3,6	6,94	+92
Denmark	2,7	5,20	+92
Slovakia	2,9	5,3	+84
Romania	12,3	22,76	+85
Norway	2,4	4,3	+80
Ukraine	30,9	52,20	+69
Portugal	6,0	9,85	+64
Finland	3,1	5,08	+64
Poland	25,0	38,40	+54
Sweden	5,5	8,72	+49
France	39,5	57,4	+45
United Kingdom	41,9	57,65	+38
Carpathian Region	12,1	16,60	+37
Belgium	7,4	10,07	+36
Hungary	7,6	10,30	+36
Austria	7,2	8,00	+11
Czech Republic	9,7	10,30	+6

Demographic indicators in the European countries and in the Carpathian Region

Country	Live births	Natural increase
	per 1000 inhabitants 1992-1993	
Carpathian Region	15,3	4,7
Slovakia	14,9	4,5
United Kingdom	13,6	2,6
Norway	13,7	3,0
Sweden	13,5	2,4
Poland	13,4	3,2
Ukraine	13,3	1,7
France	12,9	3,8
Finland	12,8	2,7
Netherlands	12,8	3,8
Switzerland	12,1	3,0
Romania	11,9	1,0
Austria	11,8	-2,6
Hungary	11,8	-2,6
Czech Republic	11,7	0,2
Portugal	11,4	1,4
Romania	10,9	-0,7
Bulgaria	10,0	-2,9
Spain	9,9	1,2

Agricultural population density and land per worker ratios in Europe around 1990

	Population density/km ²	Share of agricultural population %	Agricultural population density/km ²	Agricultural land per agricultural worker (ha)
Austria	95,0	7,0	6,7	13,6
Belgium	330,0	2,6	8,6	15,0
Bulgaria	76,0	30,0	23,0	7,4
Czech Republic	78,9	8,4	6,6	9,7
Slovakia	108,8	13,0	14,1	10,0
out of which: Carpathian Region	92,9	13,5	12,5	10,2
Denmark	120,0	5,8	6,9	18,0
Finland	15,0	10,7	1,6	12,3
France	105,0	6,8	7,1	24,1
Germany (West)	263,0	3,5	9,3	12,8
Greece	78,0	32,9	25,7	10,3
Hungary	111,0	14,8	16,4	12,1
out of which: Carpathian Region	189,0	18,0	16,6	12,7
Italy	189,0	8,9	16,9	9,5
Netherlands	375,0	4,3	16,0	6,8
Norway	13,0	6,2	0,8	79,8
Poland	123,0	26,0	32,0	4,2
out of which: Carpathian Region	125,4	43,1	54,1	2,3
Portugal	107,0	23,9	25,6	7,7
Romania	96,0	26,4	25,3	6,8
out of which: Carpathian Region	80,0	34,4	27,5	5,6
Spain	78,0	13,6	10,6	21,7
Switzerland	168,0	4,1	6,9	10,5
Sweden	19,0	4,7	0,9	26,8
Ukraine	86,5	18,7	16,2	7,9
out of which: Carpathian Region	107,0	29,8	31,9	3,2
United Kingdom	236,0	1,7	4,1	32,5

Demographic indicators in the Carpathian Region

Country	Population in 1990	Live births in 1000s	National increase	Live births er 1000	Natural increase
out of which: Carpathian Region	7 530	113,7	37,6	15,1	5,0
Share of Carpathian Region	14,6%	1,6%	42,9%	-	-
Slovakia	5 282	78,7	23,7	14,9	4,5
out of which: Carpathian Region	1 505	25,6	11,5	17,0	7,6
Share of Carpathian Region	28,5%	32,5%	48,5%	-	-
Poland	38 583	517,0	123,4	13,4	3,2
out of which: Carpathian Region	3 048	50,6	22,3	16,6	7,3
Share of Carpathian Region	7,9%	9,8%	18,1%	0	-
Romania	22 781	271,0	22,7	11,9	1,0
out of which: Carpathian Region	2 867	41,4	8,3	14,4	2,9
Share of Carpathian Region	12,6%	15,3%	36,6%	-	-
Hungary	10 312	121,6	-26,8	11,8	-2,6
out of which: Carpathian Region	1 862	25,9	0,18	13,9	0,1
Share of Carpathian Region	12,6%	21,3%	...	-	-
Five countries total	128 533	1 674,2	230,6	13,0	1,8
out of which: Carpathian Region	16 812	257,2	79,9	15,3	4,8
Share of Carpathian Region	13,0%	15,4%	34,7%	-	-

National composition in the Carpathian Region, 1992

Group	Ukrainian part	Romanian part	Slovak part	Polish part	Hungarian part	Total	%
Poles	27	4	1	3 018	-	3 050	18,1
Hungarians	157	496	97	-	1 797	2 547	15,1
Romanians	215	2 268	-	-	2	2 485	14,8
Slovaks	16	-	1 305	-	-	1 322	7,9
Ukrainians	6 611	47	30	30	-	6 718	40,0
Germans	-	9	2	-	1	12	...
Russians	394	-	-	-	-	394	2,3
Gipsies	12	10	58	-	64	144	0,9
Czechs	-	-	12	-	-	12	...
Jews	18	-	-	-	-	18	...
Others	80	33	-	-	-	113	0,7
Total	7 530	3 867	1 505	3 048	1 862	16 814	100,0

Religious composition of the Carpathian Region around 1990*

	Slovak	Polish	Roma nia	Hunga rian	Ukrain ian	Total	%
	territories						
Roman catholic	835	2 958	140	557	200	4 690	27,9
Uniate (greek) catholic	170	30	172	194	3 500	4 066	24,2
Calvinist	38	-	360	778	120	1 296	7,7
Lutheran	74	-	8	33	5	125	0,7
Eastern Christian (orthodox, pravoslav)	33	50	2 184	5	3 400	5 672	33,7
Jew	3	13	112	123	0,7
Others, unknown or not religious	347	-	-	271	200	828	4,3
Total	1 505	3 048	2 867	1862	7 530	16 812	100,0

*Estimates for the Ukraine

	Share of urban population in 1992 (%)		
	In the whole county	In the Carpathian Region	Difference
Ukraine	68,0	49,9	-18,1
Poland	61,7	35,7	-26,0
Slovakia	56,3	53,2	-3,1
Hungary	62,7	56,0	-6,7
Romania	54,4	43,9	-10,5
Five counties total	62,8	47,3	-15,5

Country	The share of the Carpathian Region in the country's total		
	population (%)	industrial productivity (%)	industrial employment (%)
Poland	7,9	4,7	6,4
Slovakia	28,5	28,9	26,2
Romania	12,6	8,8	12,0
Hungary	18,1	14,9	17,1
Ukraine	14,6	12,3	12,9

	Share of the Carpathian Region in the country's total					
	population	area	agricultural area	arable area	agricultural active po- pulation	agricultural production
Ukraine	14,6	11,7	9,2	8,0	22,9	13,5
Slovakia	28,5	33,0	30,1	25,9	29,2	22,6
Poland	7,9	7,8	7,2	6,6	13,1	4,7
Hungary	18,1	20,8	21,5	19,5	20,4	19,1
Romania	12,6	15,1	13,5	10,8	16,4	13,5
Total	12,2	12,8	11,1	9,4	18,3	...

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