

CONCLUSIONS

of the

**Meeting of the European Affairs Committees of the Hungarian National Assembly,
the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate of the Czech Republic, the Sejm and the Senate
of the Republic of Poland and the National Council of the Slovak Republic**

Warsaw, 4 June 2018

The representatives of the European Affairs Committees of the Visegrád Parliaments:

With regard to the post-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework - the place and role of cohesion policy:

- take the view that changes to the structure of future European Union budgets should not be introduced at the expense of any member state;
- emphasise that future Multiannual Financial Frameworks have to ascertain appropriate conditions for stable development across the European Union;
- express the belief that the European Union's future budget ought to reflect its priorities. New tasks and objectives should not be financed to the detriment of the current policies, in particular the cohesion policy and the Common Agricultural Policy;
- opt for the upholding of the key role of the Common Agricultural Policy and the cohesion policy by providing them with an adequate level of funding;
- with regard to new sources of funding for the European Union budget, oppose any proposals resulting in a more complex budgetary system, or increased burden to be shouldered by relatively less wealthy member states;
- are of the opinion that the European taxpayer's money should be spent effectively, in a fair and transparent manner, are critical of the presented proposals that combine the European Union budget with the compliance to the rule of law. The lack of the univocal definition and precise criteria for the assessment of the rule of law in the Member States may arise concerns about discretion and might be a dangerous precedent for creating a mechanism of political pressure on the sovereign decisions of the Member States. The discretionary character of such a mechanism may lead to an unrestricted limitation of the rights of the Member States guaranteed by the European Treaties;
- with regard to the social policy, express their concerns to the Austrian government's proposal on the indexation of the family benefits;

With regard to financing Trans-European megaprojects: needs, resources and potential risks:

- in view of the key role of the cohesion policy as the European Union's investment policy, believe that appropriate support ought to be provided to least developed regions, with the GDP *per capita* figure upheld as the fundamental decision-making index in the process of cohesion policy fund allocation;

- wish to emphasise that social-and-economic change and the considerable scale of development-supporting investments in all Visegrad Group member states, recognised as a major contribution to the Union's overall competitiveness, would not have been possible without backing secured by structural funds and the Cohesion Fund; quantifiable effects of the cohesion policy tie in with i.a. improved innovation, constructive changes on the labour market, improved transport accessibility, sound environmental protection, and increased energy effectiveness and security;
- support initiatives that strengthen economic relations, emphasize cohesion in social and transport dimension on the EU eastern border and in particular the implementation of macro-regional strategies such as the North-South corridor in central Europe, Via Carpathia and High-Speed Rail as they constitute an important element of the European territorial cooperation. Believe that these projects will be an incentive to activate and develop Central-Eastern Europe economically and will enable to include the less-developed regions in the mainstream of international exchange and to better exploit their potential;
- in the aforementioned context, express a negative opinion of cuts to the cohesion policy and cohesion policy re-targeting to focus on supporting structural reform and migrants' integration, all tantamount to major curbing of funds potentially usable for purposes of development-supporting projects of key importance to further progress across EU countries and regions;

With regard to building a solid cybersecurity of the EU - the role of the V4 countries:

- have agreed that co-operation in the field of cybersecurity, also on regional scale, is of vital importance to ascertaining a considerable level of ITC networks safety in view of cyber-attacks by state and non-state entities;
- are pleased to note closer co-operation within the framework of the Central European Cyber Security Platform (CECSP), comprising V4 member states (Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia) and Austria;
- are pleased to welcome the position of Visegrad Group member states concerning artificial intelligence and the maximising of related benefits, taken prior to official European Union communication on the matter.



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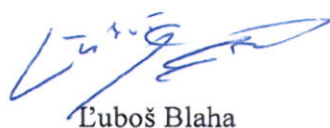
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