

## 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

with the participation of the European Integration Committee of the Croatian Parliament

The Representatives of the European Affairs Committees of the Visegrád Group Countries

### **Regarding the upcoming accession of Croatia to the EU:**

- welcome the signing of the Accession Treaty of Croatia to the European Union at the European Council meeting in December 2011 and regarding its entry into force call upon the national parliaments concerned to the timely completion of the ratification process in order to ensure the accession of Croatia to the EU as of 1 July 2013;
- express their conviction that the accession of Croatia sends a clear signal for the Western Balkans, strengthening its European perspective and highly appreciate in this respect the opening of the accession negotiations with Montenegro on 29 June 2012 and the granting of the candidate status to Serbia on 2 March 2012;

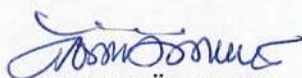
### **Regarding the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2014-2020 with special regard to the Cohesion policy:**

- recall the conclusions of the European Council of June 2012 and support that within the future Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), spending should be mobilised to support growth, employment, competitiveness and convergence, in line with the Europe 2020 Strategy. The reformed cohesion policy offers an opportunity to invest out of the crisis as it is a major tool for investment, growth and job creation at EU level and for structural reforms at national level;
- warmly welcome the Joint Declaration adopted in June by the Friends of Cohesion on the next MFF and highlight that the cohesion policy has consistently proved its added value for the EU, especially that the growing convergence allows to maintain and deepen the Single Market, the core element of the European integration;
- underline that the cohesion policy plays a major role in striking the balance between economic growth and fiscal stability and emphasize that the cohesion resources should be primarily concentrated on the less developed regions in line with the objectives of the cohesion policy;
- invite the competent EU institutions to cooperate closely in the negotiation process to ensure the timely adoption of the next MFF with a view to reaching an agreement by the end of 2012;

**Regarding the utilisation of EU funds:**

- acknowledge that the numerous national and cross-border investments realized by financial assistance of the EU funds contributed to the prosperity, job creation, fostered people to people contacts;
- underline that in some EU Member States due to the budgetary conditions, the EU budget constitutes the most important source of public investments;
- fully agree that ameliorating the absorption capacity with regard to available funds in the framework of current MFF is essential and call upon the national authorities to the acceleration of the appropriate spending of the funds;
- point out that the lessons learnt and best practices developed during the current seven-year EU budget should be duly taken into account in the course of the next MFF.

Sárospatak, 26 September 2012



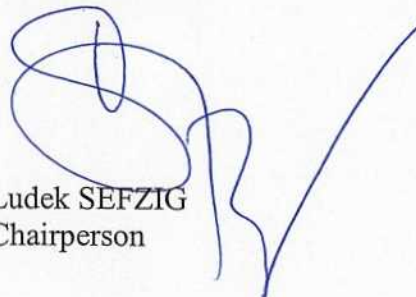
Richárd HÖRCSIK  
Chairperson



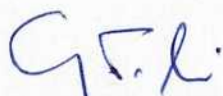
Ivan ŠTERANEC  
Vice Chairperson



Jan BAUER  
Chairperson



Ludek SEFZIG  
Chairperson



Andrzej GALAŻEWSKI  
Deputy Chairperson



Edmund WITTBRODT  
Chairperson