



Zagreb, 16 April 2026

## **Statement of the International Pan-European Union**

### **Hungary's Return to Europe**

The Pan-European Union, as the oldest movement for the unification of Europe, welcomes the results of the parliamentary elections in Hungary as a strong confirmation of the European orientation of the Hungarian people.

In the capital city of Budapest, as well as throughout the country—which 37 years ago, at the Pan-European Picnic, was the first in the Eastern Bloc to cut through the Iron Curtain and open the way to the reunification of the continent—12 April was marked by enthusiastic chants. As the leader of the victorious Tisza party, Péter Magyar, spoke on the banks of the Danube in front of the Parliament building about Hungary's return to the European political and institutional framework, a spontaneous cry rang out, accompanied by waving flags of the European Union and Hungary:

“Europe! Europe! Europe!”

This sent a powerful message to the world: Hungary has turned its course of development towards a united Europe.

The Pan-European Union particularly highlights three key messages from the Hungarian elections:

- the importance of a united, sovereign, democratic and supportive Europe
- the commitment of Hungarian citizens, especially the young, to European values
- the strength of democracy in setting limits to autocratic deviations

The Pan-European Union values the message conveyed by Hungarian citizens to their political leadership in the current geopolitical context. This brings to an end a prolonged testing of European solidarity and unity. Hungary has clearly shown that Europe must strengthen its political autonomy and sovereignty: it must not submit to regimes seeking to subordinate it, neither in the East nor in the West; it must not court autocratic governments; it must not support imperial ambitions; it must advocate for an open European space free from violent border revisions.

The Pan-European idea has once again demonstrated its relevance in Hungary. In a Europe faced with geopolitical tensions, renewed imperial ambitions, migratory movements and rapid technological change, it reminds us that the unity of the continent's peoples is not merely a

political or economic project, but also a civilisational undertaking founded on shared values and historical experience. The Pan-European vision therefore remains a precious inspiration for the peaceful unification of Europe and for strengthening cooperation, solidarity and mutual trust among nations.

A united Europe has an important mission in the international order. As a continent that has developed a strong peace-oriented consciousness through the painful historical experiences of war, Europe can and should extend its vision of cooperation, reconciliation and peaceful conflict resolution to other parts of the world. The European project contributes to the building of a more stable and just international order and to the preservation of global peace.

In this joint statement, the Vice-President of the International Pan-European Union, Walburga Habsburg Douglas, the President of the French Committee of the Pan-European Union, Éric Champion, the President of the Pan-European Union Germany, Bernd Posselt, as well as the President of the Pan-European Union of Ukraine, Prof. Ihor Zhaloba, also present their messages on the landmark elections in Hungary, which are attached to this joint communiqué as integral components.

**Prof. Pavo Barišić**, President

### **Message by the Vice-President Walburga Habsburg Douglas**

“With the clear decision in favour of a change of direction, the Hungarian people have demonstrated that the 1956 uprising as well as the 1989 Pan-European Picnic, which marked the physical dismantling of the Iron Curtain, remain valid values and points of orientation,” said the Vice-President of the International Pan-European movement, Walburga Habsburg Douglas, in a statement on the results of the Hungarian elections.

However, the election result should not be interpreted as a case of “all’s well that ends well.” As Habsburg Douglas stated: “Much hard work will still be required to overcome the structural ties to Moscow, as well as the influence of the structures created by the Orbán–Szijjártó duo, and to bring Hungary back onto a European path.”

### **Message by the Pan-Europe France – President Éric Champion**

Marcelino Oreja, former Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, referred in June 1987 in Budapest to “the first swallow that announces spring”.

A touch of poetry in politics can produce lasting effects. The events of Sunday 12 April 2026 bear witness to this, marked by a remarkable civic mobilisation in favour of a European Hungary.

In June 1989, on Heroes’ Square, Imre Nagy was rehabilitated before a vast crowd. This popular aspiration has once again been strongly expressed: a significant mobilisation to denounce corruption and all forms of interference, and to affirm commitment to a sovereign Europe.

In August 1989, Otto von Habsburg organised the Pan-European Picnic in Sopron, a foundational moment of European reunification.

Faithful to its heritage, Pan-Europe has been, is, and will remain committed to defending the values of peace, democracy, the rule of law and respect for the human person.

Isaac Newton, Galileo Galilei, René Descartes and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz — whose figures adorn the Hungarian Academy of Sciences — remain witnesses to this heritage, bearing a message that is still relevant today: that of a shared history, a necessary convergence in the face of common challenges, and a common European future.

Pan-Europe France extends its congratulations to the Hungarian people and to Péter Magyar.

### **Message by the President of Pan-Europe Germany Bernd Posselt**

When the former Hungarian opposition leader Péter Magyar declared after the parliamentary elections of 12 April 2026: “We have liberated Hungary,” the crowd gathered in Budapest erupted in cheers. Although this was no longer a dictatorship as in communist times, the country had, in recent years under Viktor Orbán, increasingly moved towards a condition of restricted freedom and had also become ever more subject to influence from Moscow.

This development would not have been expected by anyone who witnessed Hungary’s important role in the second half of the 20th century in the liberation of Central and Eastern Europe. From 1985 onwards, the pragmatic reform wing within the Budapest regime recognised that the one-party dictatorship could no longer be sustained and that communist repression of the Hungarian people was beginning to crumble. Throughout the country, flags and coats of arms reappeared featuring once again, as in earlier times, the Holy Crown of St Stephen. International observers were patiently but firmly told that this was not an expression of monarchism, but rather a symbol of Western orientation.

It was no coincidence that Péter Magyar, who has now democratically defeated Viktor Orbán despite massive Russian and US interference, spoke not only of a renewed liberation of Hungary but also announced a renewed opening towards the European idea. In undertaking this immense task, he will require considerable good fortune and support, for the efforts of Russian networks, partly supported by US influences, to destabilise Central Europe continues across the entire region from Bulgaria and Romania to the Baltic states, not least in Hungary itself.

### **Statement of the Pan-European Union of Ukraine – President Prof. Ihor Zhaloba**

The Pan-European Union of Ukraine welcomes the results of the recent elections in Hungary as a clear expression of the democratic will of the Hungarian people.

Hungary’s rich historical and cultural contribution to Europe has always been closely linked to the broader European idea—one that respects both the diversity of nations and their shared responsibility for the future of the continent. In this spirit, we see the renewed public mandate as an opportunity to further strengthen Hungary’s constructive role within the European community.

The Pan-European movement has consistently upheld the principle that a strong Europe is built upon a careful balance between national sovereignty and effective cooperation. It also draws upon Europe’s Christian-humanist heritage, which has shaped the continent’s understanding of human dignity, solidarity, and responsibility. We are confident that Hungary’s engagement in

shaping common European policies can contribute to unity, stability, and mutual understanding across the continent.

At a time when Europe continues to face serious security challenges, particularly as a result of Russia's ongoing war against Ukraine, it remains essential that European nations act with a sense of solidarity and strategic responsibility. A cohesive and forward-looking Europe is key to ensuring lasting peace.

The Pan-European Union of Ukraine stands ready to deepen dialogue and cooperation with Hungarian partners within the International Pan-European Union, in the shared pursuit of a peaceful, united, and resilient Europe.