

# Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

31/2014



STATE SECRETARIAT FOR HUNGARIAN  
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## 25th Bálványos Summer Free University and Student Camp

The Bálványos Summer Free University in Transylvania's Tusnádfürdő/Baile Tusnád was organized for the 25th time between 22 and 27 July. Prime Minister of Hungary Viktor Orbán also participated in the event. Speaking on the closing day of the free university, the Prime Minister expressed his thanks to Hungarian citizens living outside Hungary for contributing to the Fidesz-KDNP party alliance's two-thirds majority victory in the parliamentary election on 6 April. Referring to the autonomy efforts of the Hungarian community in Transylvania, the Prime Minister said that in the event that Romania does not provide the necessary funding for that community, it could rely on Hungary's assistance. The Prime Minister emphasized that the era of liberal democracies is over; instead there is a need to create a work-based state which represents national interests.

Member of the European Parliament László Tókécs urged an integrated concept of autonomy and policy for Hungarian communities abroad, saying that "We must act now. The time for autonomy is now."

Participating in the public roundtable discussion on the policy for Hungarian communities abroad entitled "The Part and the Whole", Deputy Prime Minister Zsolt Semjén said that "Hungary not only feels responsibility, but bears responsibility for every Hungarian citizen." He said that "The whole of Hungarian society agrees that Hungarian communities abroad are entitled to Hungarian citizenship, voting rights and autonomy. Hungarian enclaves should be given territorial autonomy, while the diaspora should be granted cultural autonomy." The Deputy Prime Minister added that the autonomy efforts of Hungarian communities abroad are not without precedent in Europe.

The leaders of Hungarian communities abroad also took part in the roundtable discussion. The president of the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (VMSZ) István Pásztor said that it is in the interest of Hungarians living abroad that there is continuation of the policy for their communities started four years ago, based on strong cooperation and "fraternal partnership" between them. The head of the Cultural Alliance of Hungarians in Transcarpathia (KMKSZ) László Brenzovics emphasized that the solidarity of the Hungarian nation and Hungary's support is a great help for the Hungarian community in Transcarpathia, which is in a difficult situation now. The head of the Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP) József Berényi said that his party achieved good results both in the county elections and Slovakia's presidential elections; this was partly due to the stable support of Hungary's ruling Fidesz-KDNP alliance. The president of the People's Party of Hungarians in Transylvania (EMNP) Tibor T. Toró said that the democracy centers network of thirty-two offices helped almost two-thirds of Hungarians in Transylvania in submitting their applications for simplified naturalization; the network is ready to continue its work in order to ensure that the number of new Hungarian citizens reaches one million by the end of this government term.

Speaking at the free university, Deputy State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Tamás Wetzsel said that so far more than 650,000 people have applied for Hungarian citizenship and more than 600,000 have already taken their oaths of



citizenship. He added that in the fall the Government will review the legal system related to citizenship, including what rights are granted by citizenship.

State Secretary for Hungarian communities abroad Árpád János Potápi said that strengthening economic policy will be the next important task in the field of the policy for Hungarian communities abroad.

Making use of the presence of the leaders of Hungarian communities abroad, Hungarian Autonomy Council of the Carpathian Basin (KMAT) held its session in Bálványos on Friday. At the session MEP László Tótkés was reappointed as president of the KMAT.

### Hungarian Deputy PM attends Szekler flag-raising

Deputy Prime Minister of Hungary Zsolt Semjén attended the raising of large Szekler flags in Kézdivásárhely/Targu Secuiesc, central Romania, in the square in front of the former military school. One day before the event, the Prefecture of Kovászna megye/Covasna County issued a court challenge to the permit for the event issued by the Town Hall, thus suspending its validity. The spokesperson of the Town Hall informed the Hungarian news agency MTI that on Saturday the mayor of Kézdivásárhely issued a new permit for the ceremony. In both the Hungarian and Romanian languages Mr. Semjén expressed thanks to the Prefecture of Kovászna megye for the nationwide publicity it had provided for the event. He said there was no precedent in the European Union for restricting the use of the symbols of an ethnic community, adding that the Romanian community in Hungary uses the symbols it wants and displays them where it wants. The Deputy Prime Minister said that Hungary would support a concept of autonomy which Transylvanian Hungarians create for themselves.

### Zsolt Semjén inaugurates Erzsébet Camp in Ivó

In Szeklerland's Ivó/Izvoare on Friday, Deputy Prime Minister Zsolt Semjén inaugurated the Erzsébet Camp, which has been built by the Hungarian National Foundation for Recreation (HNFR). The first 150 camp participants arrived from Transylvania's diaspora, but from next year children living in Hungary can also attend the camp, which enjoys a picturesque setting in the foothills of the Hargita/Munții Harghit. At the opening ceremony the Deputy Prime Minister said that after unifying the nation under the public law – realized by the adoption of the simplified naturalization procedure – it is also important that Hungarian communities could “fill up” the Carpathian Basin. He added that the main goal of such camps is for Hungarian children living in the Carpathian Basin to be able to link the different regions of the Basin with “personal ties”.



### Csáky: securing minority rights is necessary for Ukraine's democratization

Over the past few days the European Parliament – among others – has discussed the EU's policy in relation to Ukraine. Taking part in the talks, Member of the European Parliament from the Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP) Pál Csáky drew attention to the fact that selective democracy which secures rights only for those living in



majorities and ignores the needs of national minorities cannot exist. He emphasized that there is a large Hungarian community in Ukraine (Transcarpathia). Securing their rights along with those of other national and linguistic minorities must be part of the process of democratization in the future.

Giving an interview to the Slovakian online newspaper Teraz.sk, Mr. Csáky said he does not agree with the EU's method of handling the rights of national minorities and expressed his disapproval that in Slovakia all issues of minorities belong to the Government's sphere of authority. He added that he would welcome extension of municipalities' competences and a potential proposal connected with autonomy.



### Agreement reached on cooperation between the Government and Vojvodina Hungarians

Deputy State Secretary and head of the Prime Minister's Press Office Bertalan Havasi has informed the Hungarian news agency MTI that Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and the head of the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (VMSZ) István Pásztor agreed on the framework and content of cooperation between the Hungarian government and Vojvodina Hungarians. Mr. Havasi added that Mr. Orbán and Mr. Pásztor had talks in Baile Tusnad/Tusnádfürdő in central Romania. The two politicians concluded an agreement on the framework, forms and content of the cooperation. They agreed on the most important questions of development policy and the implementation of projects to be supported.