

# Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

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PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE  
STATE SECRETARIAT FOR HUNGARIAN  
COMMUNITIES ABROAD

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## Árpád János Potápi: Revocation of László Tőkés' state decoration is unacceptable

Speaking at a press conference in Budapest held jointly with the president of the Council for Human Dignity Dr. Zoltán Lomnici, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad at the Prime Minister's Office Árpád János Potápi expressed his protest against the revocation of the Romanian state decoration awarded to the head of the Transylvanian Hungarian National Council (EMNT) MEP László Tőkés. In Mr. Potápi's view this clearly forms part of a series of actions taken against Hungarian officials and representatives in Romania. The state secretary stressed that "Over the past 25–26 years, no one has called into question László Tőkés' brave actions, which led to the start of the Romanian revolution in Temesvár and the end of one of the cruelest communist dictatorships. Had it not been for this, we could not speak of a democratic Romania today."

On the same day, also in response to Romanian president Klaus Iohannis' decision to withdraw the Star of Romania from Hungarian MEP László Tőkés, former president of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and chairman of the Friends of Hungary Foundation Szilveszter E. Vizi announced that he was returning the Star of Romania, Officer's Cross honor which he received from Romania in 2006. Mr. Vizi told the Hungarian news agency MTI that he had informed the Romanian ambassador to Hungary about his decision in a letter expressing surprise and grave disappointment over Mr. Iohannis' move. At the same time, he praised László Tőkés' historic role in the 1989 revolution and democratic transition in Romania.

László Tőkés received the Order of the Star of Romania at the rank of knight from former Romanian president Traian Basescu in 2009, in recognition of the historic role he played in starting the revolution which precipitated the fall of communism in Romania in 1989. Former Prime Minister Victor Ponta initiated revocation of the decoration in 2013, after László Tőkés, as a Member of the European Parliament, proposed that Hungary should assume a role of "protector" in the interest of Transylvania. Romanian president Klaus Iohannis revoked the state decoration on 3 March. The President did not justify his decision, but implied that László Tőkés had not respected the Romanian Constitution.

## The "2016 – the year of young Hungarian entrepreneurs abroad" program is received with great interest in Transylvania

According to a statement by the State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad sent to the Hungarian news agency MTI, the "2016 – the year of young Hungarian entrepreneurs abroad" program was received in Transylvania with greater interest than expected. Under the program, in cooperation with Design Terminal, the State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad organized a tour with four stops in Transylvania. The tour included professional presentations and consultations between 21 and 24 March. At the events, which targeted young Hungarian entrepreneurs and young people who would like to become entrepreneurs, experienced mentors gave presentations on methods for developing entrepreneurial



skills, communication and marketing strategies and various forms of financial and sales planning. The first stop on the tour was the Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania in Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureş, the second and third were at the extramural departments of the Sapientia in Székelyudvarhely/Odorhei Secuiesc and Sepsiszentgyörgy/Sfântu Gheorghe, while the last was in Csíkszereda/Miercurea Ciuc. The events were attended by almost 400 young people, and each of them was a full house. The Carpathian Basin tour of the program will continue on 30 March in Slovakia's Rimaszombat/Rimavská Sobota, then it will go to Vojvodina, Transcarpathia, Slovenia and will finish in Transylvania's Szatmárnémeti/Satu Mare and Kolozsvár/Cluj Napoca.



### Almost half of Slovakia's population is dissatisfied with the results of the elections

According to an opinion poll by Focus, about 43% of Slovakian citizens are dissatisfied with the results of the 2016 parliamentary elections. The data in the survey shows that even the voters of the Most-Híd (Bridge) Slovak-Hungarian mixed party and the Siet' (Net) party are not satisfied with the new government.

On Wednesday, the Slovakian president Andrej Kiska appointed the ministers of the new government – the third government of Robert Fico, which consists of four parties. In the fifteen-member government, Robert Fico's party Smer has nine ministers, the Slovak National Party (SNS) has three ministers, Most-Híd has two (the minister of justice and the minister of environment), while the Siet' (Net) party has received one ministerial post.

In the meantime, the former president of the Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP) József Berényi – who resigned after his party did not manage to win seats in the Parliament – told the Slovakian Hungarian news site Felvidek.ma that the results of the MKP in the parliamentary elections “cast a shadow” on the former successes the party achieved in county, European Parliamentary and local government elections. He added that, however, “the more than 100,000 votes the MKP won gives an opportunity to move forward.” Mr. Berényi added that looking to the future, it is also an important fact that the MKP has more Hungarian voters than Most-Híd.



### Prime-ministerial commissioner Katalin Szili visits Vojvodina

In Serbia's Úvidék/Novi Sad, prime-ministerial commissioner and former speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly Katalin Szili gave a presentation on the autonomy concepts of Hungarian communities living in the Carpathian Basin. During her visit to Vojvodina, Ms. Szili met the leaders of the Youth Forum of the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (VMSZ) and the delegation of the Hungarian National Council. The prime-ministerial commissioner said that one of the aims of her visit was to learn young people's views on the issue of autonomy. She stressed that important issues affecting



the life of Hungarian communities abroad are not decided in Budapest, but only in the communities themselves. She added that the Hungarian government's task is to manage these plans and help Hungarian communities realize what they want, since this is in the interest of the Hungarian nation.



### Government commissioner István Grezsa announces the launch of Hungarian-language courses for Ukrainians

On Monday, at a press conference held in Transcarpathia's Beregszász/Berehove, government commissioner István Grezsa announced that Hungarian-language courses would be launched for Ukrainians in more than sixty towns in Transcarpathia. At the press conference held at the Ferenc Rákóczi II. Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute, the government commissioner said that supporting the Hungarian community in Transcarpathia is a major task of the Hungarian government, but it is also striving to help the majority nationality as well. In this regard, and as the popularity of the Hungarian language is growing among Ukrainians, the Hungarian government is supporting the launch of a free Hungarian-language course for Ukrainians in 62 towns in Transcarpathia. Mr. Grezsa added that under the HUF 15 million (EUR 47,900) program, applicants will have an opportunity to attend 120 hours of Hungarian-language classes, four times a week in small groups at the Adult Education Center of the Ferenc Rákóczi II. Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute.

