

# Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

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PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE  
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COMMUNITIES ABROAD

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### Conference on the importance of mother-tongue education

MEP Andrea Bocskor (representing Transcarpathia in the EP), MEP Andor Deli (representing Vojvodina), MEP Pály Csáky (Slovakia) and MEP Csaba Sógor (Transylvania) organized a conference in the European Parliament entitled “Mother tongue vs. state language? Language issues in European education systems”. The conference was opened by Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport Tibor Navracsics, who stressed that “Culture and language belong together, and mother-tongue education ensures the permanence of national minorities and their prosperity in their homeland.” In the first part of the conference, invited experts presented the situation of national minorities’ mother-tongue education in Ukraine and Serbia. The presenters of this section included the head of the Association of Hungarian Teachers in Transcarpathia (KMPSZ) Ildikó Orosz, the chairman of the Cultural Association of Hungarians in Transcarpathia (KMKSZ) László Brenzovics and State Secretary at the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of Serbia Annamária Vicsek. The second part of the conference was dedicated to the presentation of national minorities’ mother-tongue education within the European Union – Hungarian-language education in particular. The situation of Hungarian-language education in Slovakia was presented by the chairman of the Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP) József Menyhárt, while that of Transylvania was described by the president of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) Hunor Kelemen.



### Crowds of Hungarians demonstrate on the Day of Szekler Freedom

Similarly to previous years, on 10 March – the Day of Szekler Freedom – Hungarians held a demonstration and march in Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureş, demanding territorial autonomy for Szeklerland. The participants in the demonstration adopted a petition, calling on the Romanian government to start dialogue with the legitimate representatives of Szeklers. This year the demonstration was not interrupted by any incidents. The petition addressed to the Government and Parliament of Romania was read out by the vice-president of the Szekler National Council (SZNT) Csaba Ferencz at the monument of Szekler martyrs, and was adopted by the crowd with the exclamation “Autonomy!” The demonstrators again declared that they demand territorial autonomy for Szeklerland, stressing that “the dismemberment of Szeklerland or its division as part of a larger administrative unit contradicts the will of the Szekler community and Romania’s international obligations.”

On the Day of Szekler Freedom, Hungarians held several demonstrations and commemorations throughout the Carpathian Basin, expressing their solidarity with the Szeklers. Speaking at a commemoration in Budapest, the president of the Hungarian National Assembly’s Committee on National Cohesion Károly Pánczél said that “Autonomy is not a matter of negotiation: Szeklers are entitled to it.” Mr. Pánczél stressed that “autochthonous national minorities must not give up their endeavors



for autonomy” and Romanian politicians must recognize that autonomy is not separatism.



### Hungarian political martyr János Esterházy is commemorated in Kassa

On Sunday Hungarian political martyr János Esterházy was commemorated in Slovakia's Kassa/ Košice. Speaking at a wreath-laying ceremony marking the 60th anniversary of the martyred politician's death, Consul General of Hungary Attila Haraszti stressed that János Esterházy was a genuine leader of the Hungarian community in Slovakia. He added that it is of crucial importance to have more and more debates on Esterházy's role in history, and these debates should be free of prejudices and must be based on genuine historical facts.

János Esterházy was a Hungarian politician who became a member of the Parliament of Czechoslovakia in 1935 as a representative for Kassa. After the Second World War he was sentenced to death because in 1938 he had received Miklós Horthy, who had ceremonially marched into Kassa. This act was interpreted by the post-war court as participation in the destruction of Czechoslovakia.



### Dispersed Hungarian communities in Transcarpathia commemorate 15 March

Dispersed Hungarian communities living in Transcarpathia's Rahó/Rahiv and its area held an ecumenical service and ceremonial event, marking the 169th anniversary of the 1848/1849 Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence. The commemoration was addressed by government commissioner István Grezsa, who was the main patron of the event. Mr. Grezsa said that “the service of our homeland demands different kinds of attitude from age to age: in some eras, the homeland needed martyrs, while in others the mere struggle for survival.” He added that “today we are fighting for Hungarians' permanence in the Carpathian Basin, and if we manage to rediscover our identity, we will have the strength needed to look forward to the future with hope.”



### Árpád János Potápi: Hungarians in Croatia can look forward to the future with more hope than before

Speaking at the central March 15 commemoration of the Democratic Community of Hungarians in Croatia (HMDK) held in Bellye/Bilje, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad at the Prime Minister's Office Árpád János Potápi said that “Hungarians in Croatia can look forward to the future with more hope than before.” The state secretary stressed that this is due to the fact that the HMDK now has a stronger representation in the Croatian parliament than in previous years, therefore



it can serve the issues of the local Hungarian community more effectively than before. Mr. Potápi added that the general atmosphere in the Croatian parliament also favors national minorities, since the current leaders represent “national thinking.” The state secretary said that a further positive development is that after a four-year break the Hungarian-Croatian minority joint committee held a meeting, and this committee is working for the permanence of Croats living in Hungary and Hungarians living in Croatia. Mr. Potápi added that in recent years the Hungarian government has paid particular attention to Hungarian communities living outside the kin-state and has ensured great amounts of financial support for the strengthening of Hungarian economic life abroad.



### Árpád János Potápi: Hungary pays particular attention to the diaspora

Speaking at an international conference in Jerusalem’s Knesset entitled “Diasporas 2017 – International Seminar”, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi said that the Hungarian government is paying particular attention to the diaspora. The state secretary presented Hungary’s diaspora policy and the Hungarian government’s most important programs aimed at young people living in diaspora communities in the West. In his presentation the State Secretary stressed that the Hungarian government pays special attention to Hungarian communities scattered around the world. Among the most important programs he mentioned the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program, which has been a great success since 2013. Mr. Potápi said that due to the program’s achievements to date, this year the number of scholarship holders will be raised from 100 to 115, and scholarship holders will be sent to Hungarian communities living in Israel in 2017 as well.

### Hungarians living in the US commemorate March 15

In Washington D.C. Hungarian scouts presented a special show, commemorating 15 March 1848. The ceremony was addressed by Deputy State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad at the Prime Minister’s Office Dr. Péter Szilágyi. In his speech, the Deputy State Secretary stressed that Hungary relies on its compatriots living in the USA. After the commemoration, Mr. Szilágyi took part in the regional meeting of the Hungarian Diaspora Council in Washington D.C., which was attended by several representatives of American Hungarian organizations. Speaking to the Hungarian news agency MTI, the deputy state secretary said that Hungary is paying more and more attention to the diaspora. The Government is planning to support Hungarian weekend schools in the USA more intensively, offering teachers, books and financial assistance to them. It is also planning to increase the number of interns in the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program, one of the Hungarian government’s most important diaspora programs.

Hungarians in New York also commemorated the anniversary of the 1848/1849 Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence. The central commemoration was



held at the Kossuth statue in Manhattan and was followed by an unveiling ceremony for the 1956 monument in Riverside Park. The ceremony was addressed by Deputy State Secretary Péter Szilágyi. In the afternoon, the Hungarian Diaspora Council held a regional meeting in New York, at which the deputy state secretary presented Hungary's diaspora strategy.

In the first half of the week Mr. Szilágyi also made a visit to Hungarian communities living in Florida, where a Hungarian Day was held for the first time. The event was supported by the State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad.

### Prime Ministerial Commissioner Katalin Szili attends commemoration in France

The members of the Cote d'Azur French-Hungarian Association held their central 15 March commemoration in Nice. The event was attended by former House Speaker and Special Commissioner of the Prime Minister Dr. Katalin Szili. Speaking at the event, Ms. Szili stressed the importance of the preservation of the mother tongue. She highlighted that "1848 is a celebration of freedom and independence, which is also a message to Europe, implying that we want to preserve our Hungarian identity and enjoy it freely as individuals and as a community – both in the Carpathian Basin and the diaspora."

