

# Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

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PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE  
STATE SECRETARIAT FOR HUNGARIAN  
COMMUNITIES ABROAD

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## HUF 1 billion for programs of the 2018 – Year of Hungarian families abroad

Speaking at a press conference in Budapest, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi announced that the Hungarian Government will ensure HUF 1 billion for the Carpathian Basin programs of the “2018 – Year of Hungarian families abroad”, which will include calls for applications for family-friendly enterprises, infrastructure developments at hospitals and training courses, as well as camps and different programs for children. Mr. Potápi added that the Hungarian Government will ensure HUF 200 million (EUR 647,000) to support the family-friendly activities of Hungarian communities and HUF 400 million (EUR 1.2 million) will be distributed among those Hungarian enterprises abroad which offer family-friendly services. He added that a further HUF 210 million (EUR 680,000) will be spent on the development of healthcare institutions and HUF 50 million (EUR 161,000) on different family events, festivals and programs. The state secretary added that special attention will be paid to children and youth, and at the end of the thematic year the most active family-friendly communities will receive special awards. As part of the thematic year, a large-scale research project will also be carried out in order to get a more exact picture of Hungarian families living abroad.

## Matthias Corvinus Memorial Year is opened in Szeged

The official opening event of the Matthias Corvinus Memorial Year – which was launched by the State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad – was held on Friday in Szeged. The event began with a Holy Mass celebrated by Bishop László Kiss-Rigó, in which State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi delivered a speech. The state secretary stressed that 560 years ago, on 12 January 1458, the leading aristocratic families of the Hungarian Kingdom agreed that – instead of foreign dynasties – they would choose a Hungarian king: Matthias, the son of János Hunyadi. Mr. Potápi added that the figure of Matthias Corvinus continues to unite the Hungarian nation, and several legends and folk tales are connected to his name. He added that an important aim of the memorial year is to engage children and young people in its programs. The state secretary said that the figure of King Matthias has a message not only for Hungarians, but also for the other nations of Central Europe. He added that the greatness of Matthias Corvinus is in the fact that he recognized that, in order to stop the expansion of the Ottoman Empire, the peoples of Central Europe needed to unite their forces.



## Péter Szijjártó: The Romanian prime minister’s statement is unacceptable

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó has said that the statement by Romanian prime minister Mihai Tudose in relation to Hungarian autonomy aspirations is totally unacceptable, and shows disgraceful disregard for European values and 21st-century norms. Mr. Szijjártó informed reporters that Romania’s



ambassador to Budapest had been summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade on Friday morning in relation to the affair.

At his Friday press conference Mr. Szijjártó was responding to a report on news portal Scnews.ro on Wednesday evening which stated that the Romanian prime minister had told television news station Realitatea the following in relation to Hungarian autonomy aspirations: “My answer is the same as it was when, to mark some day or other, they tried to raise their flag. At the time I made it clear that if that flag is fluttering in the wind, the local people responsible for it will also be hanging up there next to it”.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade stressed that “In the interests of the Hungarian national minority living in Romania, the Hungarian government has always aspired to build bilateral relations with Romania on mutual respect. This has been met with differing levels of reciprocation by the various Romanian governments.” The Minister added, however, that “It is beyond dispute that the statement by Romania’s current prime minister – in which, to all intents and purposes, he threatened a national minority and its representatives with execution – is absolutely unacceptable, and shows an utterly disgraceful disregard for Europe, European values and 21st-century norms”. Mr. Szijjártó added that “For precisely this reason we regard it as self-evident and beyond dispute that Romania’s prime minister and government must rectify this situation at the earliest opportunity.”

### Freedom of religion is celebrated in Torda

On 13 January, high-ranking figures in the religious and secular spheres celebrated the anniversary of the 1568 Torda/Turda national assembly, when the freedom of religion was first proclaimed in Europe. The participants at the event spoke about the importance of mutual respect and tolerance, and the preservation of Christian values. Addressing the event, the Speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly László Kövér stressed that 450 years ago Central Europe set an example to the world and it is also an example today. Mr. Kövér also announced that, in response to the request of Transylvanian Hungarians, he will initiate in the Hungarian Parliament the commemoration of 13 January, the day of the Torda Resolution, when religious freedom was officially announced in Europe. Speaking at the event, Minister of Human Capacities Zoltán Balog said that the message of the Torda national assembly is not only religious tolerance: this historic event also encourages us to fight for justice through “noble means.” Mr. Balog stressed that this message can unite people of Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox churches, since all of them believe in the same principles concerning the basic questions of human existence.

### The mentors and interns of the Petőfi Sándor Program meet in Szamosújvár

Last week, the interns of the Petőfi Sándor Program serving in Transylvania and their mentors met in Szamosújvár/Gherla in order to share experience and familiarize themselves with one another’s work. The event was attended by the ministerial commissioner responsible for the program István Grezsa. He stressed that due to the



program, “the curse of Trianon can be turned into economic, political, cultural and social advantage in the 21st century.” The meeting was attended by 24 scholarship holders who are serving in dispersed Hungarian communities in Transylvania within the Hungarian Government’s Petőfi Sándor Program, helping Hungarians’ every day community life. Mr. Grezsa stressed that the Petőfi Sándor Program – which focuses on Hungarian communities in the Carpathian Basin – and the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program – the aim of which is to help the diaspora – have become the flagships of Hungary’s policy for Hungarian communities abroad.



### József Menyhárt: “I believe in our community”

Speaking to the Pátria Radio, the chairman of the Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP) József Menyhárt spoke about the past year of the Hungarian community in Slovakia and the MKP. Mr. Menyhárt stressed that his party – which is strong both at local and regional level – continues to be the primary strategic partner of the Hungarian Government. He added that in 2016, Hungary ensured HUF 28 million EUR for the Hungarian community in Slovakia, while the Minority Cultural Fund – which is responsible for this field in Slovakia – ensures only 4 million EUR for this purpose. Concerning future plans, the chairman of the MKP said that the main aim of the MKP in 2018 is to maximize the number of its mayors and representatives in municipalities. Regarding national topics like health care, social issues and transportation, Mr. Menyhárt said that the MKP has to strengthen in these fields.



### Carpathian Basin Cultural Forum in Zenta

More than 100 people working in the field of culture attended the Carpathian Basin cultural forum in Vojvodina’s Zenta. This year’s event marked the Matthias Corvinus Memorial Year. The forum was organized by the Vojvodina Hungarian Cultural Institute and the Vojvodina Hungarian Cultural Association. Addressing the event, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi presented the Hungarian Government’s thematic years which have been organized since 2012 and spoke about the main results of the policy for Hungarian communities abroad. Mr. Potápi said that the events of the 20th century showed that it was “not the century of Hungarians”, but it seems now that in the 21st century a strong Hungary and a strong Hungarian nation will be built. He added that this is proved by the results of the policy for Hungarian communities abroad as well. The state secretary added that in recent years several important cultural projects were realized in Vojvodina due to the Hungarian Government’s support.





### Hungary's economic development program is successful in Muravidék

Near HUF 1 billion (EUR 3.2 million) was distributed among Hungarian entrepreneurs in Muravidék as part of the Hungarian Government's economic development program. Speaking in Dobronak/Dobrovnik on Thursday, the head of the Hungarian National Trading House Zsanett Oláh said that as part of the program – which is coordinated by the offices of the Hungarian Trading House – HUF 500 million (EUR 1.6 million) was distributed among entrepreneurs in the first round, while in the second round HUF 450 million (EUR 1.4 million) was ensured for this purpose. In the first round, 155 entrepreneurs won financial assistance, while in the second round this number was 174. These sums will be spent on agricultural, business and touristic developments. Ms. Oláh stressed that Hungarian companies in the Carpathian Basin are the main forces of Hungarian economy and cooperation between these enterprises is of crucial importance.

