

Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

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Petition sheets for the Minority SafePack Initiative are available at Hungarian post offices from the end of January

The Rákóczi Association – which is supporting the campaign to collect signatures for the Minority SafePack Initiative – has announced that petition sheets for the initiative will be available at post offices in Hungary from the end of January. The association has also said it is pleased that more and more people and organizations are supporting the initiative, which was launched by the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) to improve the situation of autochthonous national minorities in Europe. The Rákóczi Association also expressed the hope that the necessary one million signatures will be collected by the deadline of 3 May. The association added that support for the initiative has come not only from their organization, but also the National Union of Students Conference and several other social organizations, church communities and municipalities – regardless of party affiliation.



Hunor Kelemen: there are no opposition parties in Romania which are worth entering into dialogue with

Speaking to the local radio station of Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureş, the chairman of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) Hunor Kelemen said that the fact that Viorica Dăncilă will be Romania's third prime minister within one year proves that the Social Democratic Party (PSD) "is uncertain what to do with governance." Mr. Kelemen added that if the PSD continues this policy, it might have further five or six prime ministers by the 2020 elections. The head of the RMDSZ added that "a country cannot be governed in this way." He added that he does not know Viorica Dăncilă, therefore he would not like to form any opinion or prejudice about her.

As has been previously reported, last week Romanian Prime Minister Mihail Tudose resigned after his ruling Social Democrat Party (PSD) leaders overwhelmingly voted to withdraw political backing for him. In the days leading up to his resignation, several Hungarian politicians called on Mr. Tudose to resign and Hungary's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó summoned Romania's Ambassador to Budapest after the Prime Minister declared: "If they hang the Szekler flag on institutions in Szeklerland, the people who fly these flags will hang as well. Autonomy for Szeklers is out of the question." The statement of the former Romanian prime minister caused serious concern and indignation among Hungarians in Transylvania, Hungary and the Carpathian Basin.





László Kövér: Hungarians are the nation of permanence

Speaking at a ceremony on the Day of Hungarian Culture held in Dunaszerdahely/ Dunajská Streda, the Speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly László Kövér said that although history has divided and dispersed Hungarians, their culture will preserve them; therefore Hungarians are the nation not of dispersion but of permanence. The House Speaker stressed that Hungarian culture has extraordinary strength which is rooted in language and faith, and it is able to unite and retain Hungarians. Mr. Kövér also spoke about the impact of culture on communities and the importance of its preservation. The House Speaker highlighted that culture can preserve a community only if the community is able to preserve its culture.



Consulate General of Hungary in Szabadka helps registration for voting

Hungarian citizens living outside the kin-state who wish to vote in Hungary's parliamentary elections scheduled for 8 April 2018 must register at the National Election Office by 24 March. Consul General of Hungary to Szabadka/Subotica János Babity said that Hungary's Consulate General is offering help to Hungarian citizens living in Vojvodina who wish to register to vote. The consul added that the consulate is also helping those Hungarians who have already registered but for whom some of their personal information has changed.



Péter Szijjártó: The Hungarian Government is prepared to come to an agreement, provided it is in line with the interests of Transcarpathian Hungarians

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó has received the chairman of the Cultural Association of Hungarians in Transcarpathia (KMKSZ) László Brenzovics in Budapest. After the talks, the parties held a joint press conference at which the Hungarian minister stressed: "The Hungarian Government is ready to engage in consultation and to come to an agreement in relation to the Ukrainian Education Act, but only if the contents of such an agreement are in line with the interests and will of Transcarpathian Hungarians." Mr. Szijjártó added that "Hungary has 150,000 arguments for why it has an interest in a democratic Ukraine and good Hungarian-Ukrainian cooperation, as there are 150,000 Hungarians living in Ukraine – primarily in Transcarpathia". The minister said that "Good cooperation between the given country and their home country is in the fundamental interests of all Hungarian national communities beyond the borders, and accordingly the Hungarian Government has always striven to engage in cooperation with every neighboring country based on mutual respect." The minister stressed that Hungary is the loudest supporter of Ukraine's European integration processes, and as a result Hungary and



the Hungarian national community regarded it as a “stab in the back” when Ukraine’s Parliament adopted the new Education Act, which fundamentally restricts the rights of national minorities. Mr. Szijjártó added that “Hungary’s standpoint has continued to be that this legislation contravenes international and European law, as well as bilateral agreements, including the 1991 basic treaty between Hungary and Ukraine.”

Hungarian organizations in Austria move to new headquarters thanks to the kin-state’s support

On Sunday, six Hungarian organizations in Austria – among them, the Association of Hungarian Teachers’ in Austria (AMAPED) – moved to new headquarters in Vienna, thanks to the Hungarian Government’s support. The opening event was attended by State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad at the Prime Minister’s Office Árpád János Potápi. Speaking to the Hungarian news agency MTI after the ceremony, the state secretary said that the Hungarian Government had provided HUF 10 million (EUR 32,000) for AMAPED. He added that due to this support, AMAPED and five other Austrian Hungarian organizations moved to new headquarters and established the Hungarian Education and Cultural Center of Austria. Mr. Potápi stressed that the help Hungary provided for Hungarians living in Austria shows the extraordinary attention the kin-state pays to Hungarian diaspora communities.

Péter Szilágyi: Hungary pays special attention to the diaspora

Addressing the Family Festival of Hungarian Cultural Days in Dublin, Deputy State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad at the Prime Minister’s Office Péter Szilágyi stressed that the Hungarian Government pays special attention to the Hungarian organizations of those living far from the kin-state – including Hungarians living in Ireland. The deputy state secretary made a three-day official visit to Ireland, during which he met with Hungarians living in Cork and Dublin. Speaking in Dublin, Mr. Szilágyi said that culture is a bond which links Hungarians across the seas and oceans, and expressed his pleasure in being able to spend the Day of the Hungarian Culture in a city where Hungarians 2,000 kilometers from their homeland are preserving their culture. The deputy state secretary said that it is also good news that, within the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Scholarship Program, this year – as in previous years – Hungary will be able to send to Ireland scholarship holders who can help local Hungarians in their everyday community life.