

# Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

26/2018



PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE  
STATE SECRETARIAT FOR HUNGARIAN  
COMMUNITIES ABROAD

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## Zsolt Semjén: the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program and the Petőfi Sándor Program are success stories of the policy for Hungarian communities abroad

Speaking at the 2017/2018 closing conference of the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program and the Petőfi Sándor Program launched by the State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad, Deputy Prime Minister and president of the Christian Democratic People's Party (KDNP) Zsolt Semjén said that the two programs are "success stories of the policy for Hungarian communities abroad." The conference was attended by those scholarship holders who worked among Hungarian communities in different parts of the world within the framework of one of the two programs. The Kőrösi Csoma Sándor and the Petőfi Sándor programs were launched in 2013 and 2015 respectively. The aim of the former program is to help Hungarian communities living in the diaspora, while the Petőfi Sándor Program focuses on dispersed Hungarian communities in the Carpathian Basin. Speaking at the conference, the deputy prime minister stressed that both programs work smoothly and with an attention to detail, helping Hungarian communities around the world preserve their identity and language. Mr. Semjén added that umbrella organizations of the local communities decide the course of action and the Hungarian government accepts their guidance. He stressed that the programs work alongside the Hungarian Diaspora Council, founded in 2011, which sends delegates to the Hungarian Standing Conference (the highest level forum of Hungarian organizations abroad). Speaking at the conference, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi said that since the launch of the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program, the number of scholarship holders has grown from 47 to 225. Speaking about the main results of the program, the state secretary said that in several cities Hungarian cultural life "revived", new weekend schools were founded, new scout groups were formed and several large-scale initiatives were introduced.



## The FUEN holds congress in Leeuwarden

Last week, the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) held congress in Leeuwarden. Addressing the event, the president of the umbrella organization Loránt Vincze said that the FUEN and the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) might submit the Minority SafePack Initiative to the new European Commission which will be formed after the European Parliament elections instead of the one which is in office now if the current EC will not initiate a real dialogue about the initiative. Mr. Vincze stressed that the 1.3 million signatures of European citizens which were collected as part of the Minority SafePack initiative is a "priceless treasure" but it is also huge responsibility. The head of the FUEN added that before submitting the initiative to the European Commission, they must ascertain that the protection of the rights of national minorities is a goal that can be reached and their initiative will be supported.



### King Matthias exhibition is opened in Slovakia

Speaking at the opening event of a travelling exhibition in Slovakia's Debrőd/Debrad' which presents the life and heritage of Hungarian king Matthias Corvinus, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi stressed that "We, Hungarians always have outstanding figures whom we can be proud of." The exhibition is part of the King Matthias Memorial Year (2018) which was launched by the State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad at the end of 2017. After the opening of the exhibition, Mr. Potápi took part in the largest event of the local Hungarian community which pays tribute to Hungarian king Saint Ladislaus who was a dominant figure in the history of the village.



### Victims of the 1944-45 massacre in Vojvodina are commemorated

The 5th anniversary of the establishment of the museum for the victims of the 1944-45 Communist purges in Serbia was celebrated in Csúrog/Čurug. Among others, the event was attended by the head of the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (VMSZ) István Pásztor. At the event, the Razzia 1942 association expressed its thanks to Mr. Pásztor and all those people and institutions which contributed to the establishment of the museum. Speaking at the ceremony, the head of the VMSZ recalled the main moments of the reconciliation between Serbs and Hungarians, highlighting the most important milestone: when the Hungarian and Serbian Presidents jointly paid tribute to the victims. Mr. Pásztor emphasized that the event – together with the 5th anniversary of the museum – is the most important step towards the building of a policy based on peace and forgiveness.



### The rights of the Hungarian community in Transcarpathia cannot be impaired

"We have an interest in good Hungarian-Ukrainian relations, but are doing everything possible to ensure that the rights of the Hungarian national community in Transcarpathia are not impaired in any form", Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó declared on Friday in Alsószlatina/Nyizsne Szolotvino, near Ungvár/Uzhhorod, Western Ukraine. The Hungarian Foreign Minister spoke to journalists after he and Minister of Human Capacities Miklós Kásler held a meeting with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin and Minister of Education Lilija Hrincevics, with the participation of representatives of Transcarpathian Hungarians, to discuss issues relating to Article 7 of the Ukrainian Education Act, which discriminates against minorities. At the press conference held following the meeting, amidst major interest from the Ukrainian media, Mr. Szijjártó declared that "Hungary's government has an interest in good bilateral Hungarian-Ukrainian



relations, and thinks back almost with nostalgia to the period preceding last September, when bilateral relations were still about infrastructure investment projects and the establishment of new border crossing stations”. Stressing the Hungarian Government’s position, the Minister said: “We are doing everything to ensure that the rights of the Hungarian national community in Transcarpathia are not impaired in any form”. The Minister also said that the Hungarian delegation was happy to acknowledge Minister Hrinevics’s statement according to which Ukraine respects and will be implementing the recommendations of the Venice Commission.



### Prime Minister’s Commissioner meets Hungarians living in Manchester

Last week, Prime Minister’s Commissioner Katalin Szili made an official visit to Hungarian communities living in Manchester. During her stay, she met Hungarians living in the city and attended a Transylvanian Hungarian festival which was organized in Manchester for the second time. Ms. Szili also held talks with Lord Mayor June Hitchen on the development of bilateral cultural relations. Speaking to the Hungarian news agency MTI, Ms. Szili said that during the talks with Ms. Hitchen, they also spoke about the opportunities in the field of economic cooperation. Ms. Szili added that the Lord Mayor of Manchester will make an official visit to Szeklerland in order to create an opportunity for her city – similarly to the Transylvania Hungarian festival in Manchester - to present its values to Szekler people.

