

Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

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COMMUNITIES ABROAD

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Tamás Wetzel: changes in the distribution of financial resources

Giving an interview for the Pannon RTV (a Hungarian-language television in Serbia), Deputy State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Tamás Wetzel said that the directives of Hungary's policy for Hungarian communities abroad have not changed radically after the formation of the new government. Mr. Wetzel said that larger and smaller changes will be necessary, for instance, in the distribution of financial resources, among others. He added that the major aim is to ensure the continuous development of Hungarian communities abroad. Mr. Wetzel explained that "these changes mean, first of all, "fine-tuning", reviewing the results achieved and drawing conclusions. He added that "We are now in the phase of re-planning, practically, we are launching a kind of strategic thinking, taking into account the opinion of our partners abroad." The Deputy State Secretary said that considering the main fields of assistance in the next period, priority will be given to education, economy and the enforcement of rights.



Draft law on Szeklerland's autonomy is completed

At a press conference held on Wednesday, the president of the Hungarian Civic Party (MPP) in Kovászna megye/Județul Covasna József Kulcsár Terza announced that the draft law on Szeklerland's autonomy prepared by the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) and the MPP has been completed. The RMDSZ said that between 10 and 15 August the document will be made public and issued for public debate where it will be finalized. Mr. Kulcsár Terza added that according to the RMDSZ's promise, the draft law will be submitted to the Parliament in September. The document is based on the Szekler National Council's (SZNT) former autonomy statute, but it has been improved and extended, since passages concerning Szeklerland's economy and the rights of the Romanian community living in Szeklerland have also been included in it.

Traian Băsescu rejects PM's nomination for Minister of Culture – Rozália Biró

Traian Băsescu has rejected Prime Minister's nomination for Minister of Culture and Deputy Prime Minister – Rozália Biró, saying that Ms. Biro "is unsuitable for the position." At a press conference held on Thursday evening, the President said that "whenever during his term the Prime Minister will nominate the senator of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) Rozália Biro for a position requiring experience in administration – such as Minister of Regional Development or Transport Minister – he will not hesitate to approve this nomination, but not at the Ministry of Culture, where "in-depth knowledge of the Romanian language is a must". The President added that "it is a fact that everybody makes mistakes but at this ministry such a mistake is not permitted", referring to an earlier incident when Ms.



Biró – talking in a radio interview – did not know the meaning of the Romanian word *biped*. The head of the RMDSZ Hunor Kelemen said that the President’s decision was politically motivated, adding that if we look back to the past 25 years of the Hungarian community in Transylvania, we see that positive changes took place but Romania is still far from having a normal value system.

Zsolt Szilágyi is the EMNP’s presidential candidate

On Sunday at a press conference of the Transylvanian Hungarian People’s Party (EMNP) in Csíkszereda/Miercurea Ciuc, the leaders of the party announced that they nominate the party’s vice president Zsolt Szilágyi as a candidate at the Romanian presidential election scheduled for November. The EMNP’s president Tibor T. Toró said that according to his party’s board, values represented by the EMNP must appear during the election campaign. He added that one of the topics which is in the interest of Hungarians in Transylvania concerns the Hungarian community’s expectations towards Romania, and the second one – a potential structural reform of the state.

A precondition for the party’s participation in the election is to collect 200,000 supporting signatures until 23 September. Presidential candidate Zsolt Szilágyi expressed his pleasure that the presidents of the party’s county organizations and regional directors are willing to take part in the process of signature collection. He said that “the aim of the EMNP is to ensure an institutional framework for the Transylvanian Hungarian self-determination and Szeklerland’s territorial autonomy by realizing those models of autonomy in Romania which are already functioning in Europe”.

Previously, the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) – which is supported by the majority of Hungarians in Transylvania – announced that it nominates the party’s president Hunor Kelemen as a candidate at Romania’s presidential election. This is the first time that the Hungarian community in Transylvania has two presidential candidates.



Aleksandar Vučić thanks Viktor Orbán for flood mitigation assistance

Deputy-State Secretary for the Prime Minister’s Press Staff Bertalan Havasi has informed the Hungarian news agency MTI that Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić has thanked Viktor Orbán for Hungary’s offer of financial aid for the mitigation of flood damage in Serbia. At a conference in Brussels in mid-July, Hungary’s Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Tibor Navracsics offered 300 million forints (1 million euros) in financial aid in the name of Hungary to help mitigate flood damage suffered in Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. In his letter, Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić wrote that Hungary’s support will be a huge help to those in need. The Serbian Prime Minister stressed in his letter to his Hungarian counterpart Viktor Orbán that “the contribution of the Hungarian Government is the best proof of the friendship between our countries and peoples.”



Transcarpathian battalion will not be sent to Eastern Ukraine

The Transcarpathian territorial defense battalion will not be sent to the area of anti-terrorist operation in Eastern Ukraine. According to the report of the Transcarpathian Regional State Administration, the battalion will stay in the county to defend the region's objects of strategic importance. The Transcarpathian Regional State Administration announced that this decision was made by Ukraine's Ministry of Defence.

