

# Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

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COMMUNITIES ABROAD

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## Kinga Gál: the Minority Intergroup of the EP is stronger than ever

At this year's first session of the European Parliament's Minority Intergroup (Intergroup for Traditional Minorities, National Communities and Languages) held in Strasbourg on Thursday, MEP Kinga Gál (Fidesz party) was elected Co-President of the body. At the session 65 MEPs became members of the intergroup from 21 member states of the European Union and from all political factions of the EP. In her announcement, Ms. Gál expressed her pleasure that "the forum is stronger than ever". She wrote that "the high number of members in the intergroup and the MEPs' interest in the field proves that the problems of minorities and national communities is extremely topical in the EU. Therefore, the challenges these communities face must be represented at an EU level. This is what our intergroup creates an opportunity for." Ms. Gál underlined that "people belonging to national and lingual minorities should have equal opportunities, therefore, they must be treated as equal and full citizens by the government and the majority society of the country they live in."



## Mayor of Kolozsvár Emli Boc promises to pay attention to multilingualism

The president of the Hungarian Students Association of Cluj Napoca (KMDSZ) has informed the Hungarian news agency MTI that on Friday the mayor of Kolozsvár/Cluj Napoca Emil Boc received the representatives of the Hungarian youth organizations and promised them that in the future he would pay special attention to the multilingualism of the program series entitled "European Youth Capital". The meeting was initiated by six youth organizations who had complained that – despite earlier promises – the opening event of the program on New Year's Eve was held only in Romanian, and the even the logo of the program lacked inscriptions in other languages.

## Ruling in László Tőkés' lawsuit is expected within two weeks

Within two weeks the court of Nagyvárad/Oradea will announce its ruling in the lawsuit launched by MEP László Tőkés against the police of the town who had fined him in August because "he had hoisted an advertising flag" (a Szekler flag) on his office. László Tőkés' lawyer Előd Kincses has said that the court has conducted the trial and adopted the written evidence, but refused to hear historian and external member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences Sándor Pál-Antal as a witness who is an expert in the field of Szekler national symbols.

On 26 August 2014 the police of Nagyvárad drew up a report ordering László Tőkés, as a "natural person", to remove the "advertising flag" from his office. In the event of this warning being ignored, the authority warned that the penalty would be a fine of between 30,000 and 50,000 lei. Mr. Tőkés took the case to court, demanding its invalidation, stating that "the Szekler flag is not an advertising tool and its use does not violate any law."



## The practical application of the ministerial decree on the restoration of Slovak citizenship starts in February

The practical application of the ministerial decree which would restore Slovak citizenship to those who lost it as a result of the 2010 Act on Citizenship will start in February. Slovakia's 2010 Act on Citizenship states that those who acquire the citizenship of another country are deprived of their Slovak citizenship. As a result of this act, more than 900 people have lost their Slovak citizenship so far. The decree of Slovakia's Ministry of Interior makes possible the restoration of Slovak citizenship for those who apply for it, but makes it conditional upon the possession of a permanent residence abroad, therefore, it does not mean a solution for the majority of Hungarians living in Slovakia.



## Partial mobilization in Ukraine will start on 20 January

At a press conference held on Wednesday in Ungvár/Uzhhorod, the Military Commissioner of Transcarpathia, Colonel Ivan Vasylytsyun announced that the fourth phase of the partial mobilization procedure in Ukraine will start to take place on 20 January 2015 in the course of which 3,000 Transcarpathian men between the age of 20 and 60 who have professional military qualifications will be sent to the Ukrainian army. The colonel said that the mobilization which will last until 1 April and will involve 50,000 citizens nationwide is necessary because the soldiers who have been taking part in the country's "counter terrorism mission" in Eastern Ukraine since last year must be replaced.

In connection with the mobilization, the head of the Cultural Alliance of Hungarians in Transcarpathia (KMKSZ) László Brenzovics said that his party hopes that the mobilization of Hungarians in Transcarpathia during the partial mobilization procedure in Ukraine will not be disproportionate: i.e. similarly to last year, the number of people sent to the war zone will be proportionate, depending on the population of the regions concerned. Mr. Brenzovics added that both Ukraine's Minister of Defence Stepan Poltorak and the president of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine Oleksandr Turchynov had promised that only those men would be sent to the army who had already fulfilled military service, are reserve officers or have professional military qualifications necessary for the army.

## Transcarpathia needs a Hungarian majority electoral district

In its latest analysis, the Research Institute for Hungarian communities abroad (NPKI) has underlined that "the Election Observation Mission of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) monitoring the early parliamentary elections in Ukraine formulated a priority recommendation to redraw electoral districts by taking



into account the settlement of national minorities and in full consultation with them.” The NPKE highlighted that the OSCE report could serve as a guide for the Cultural Association of Hungarians in Transcarpathia (KMKSZ) to keep the issue on the agenda and to successfully demand the establishment of a Hungarian majority electoral district.