

# Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

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## 610,000 Hungarian citizenship applications received, says Semjén

On Wednesday evening at a joint local forum with the Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament László Kövér in Fehérgyarmat in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg countyCounty, Deputy Prime Minister Zsolt SemjenSemjén said that “Hungarian authorities have received a total of 610,000 applications for Hungarian citizenship during the current government’s cycleterm in office.”. The Deputy Prime Minister said that pessimistic expectations predictions by experts that Hungary’s state administration would be unable to process more than 200,000--250,000 applications had proven to be wrong. Mr. Semjén emphasized that a full Hungarian citizenship includes a full citizenship of the European Union, and it also includes a the right to vote. The Deputy Prime Minister added that of those who have received Hungarian citizenship, more than 195,000 people have registered to vote in the Hungarian parliamentary election on April 6. He called it this a large number, noting that 115,000 of them new citizens are younger under than 18 and are thus not yet eligible to vote. Mr. Semjén added that as more than another more than 80,000 of these the new Hungarian citizens have a permanent Hungarian residency status, they wereand are therefore not required to register for the election at all. The Deputy Prime Minister said that Hungary's policy is to bear responsibility for Hungarian communities abroad. He added that, according to the a passage included in the Constitution, Hungarian communities living abroad should tell say what is necessary for their community to remaincontinued existence, and Hungary will support the concept of autonomy they suggest.



## RMDSZ’s draft autonomy law is ready

On Tuesday the President of the Hungarian Civic Party (MPP) in Háromszék, József Kulcsár Terza, announced that the RMDSZ’s draft autonomy law had been completed. Speaking to the online newspaper maszol.ro, the Secretary General of the RMDSZ Péter Kovács has also confirmed the news. Mr. Kulcsár Terza said that the MPP had received the draft law last Friday. They will study the 18-page document this week and deliver their opinion on it, and – as stated in the cooperation agreement between the two parties – a working group will meet next week to work out a draft law that is acceptable to the experts of both parties. Mr. Kulcsár Terza said that it is very important to prepare a document which can properly regulate the autonomy concept of Szeklerland. He added that he had been commissioned by the leader of his party to represent the MPP in the working group as a jurist, but the party insists that experts from the Szekler National Council (SZNT) should also take part in the work. As soon as the consensus draft law is completed, it will be put to public debate.



### For minority rights in Brussels

On Saturday the head of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) Hunor Kelemen said in Székelyudvarhely/ Odorheiu Secuiesc that the RMDSZ would continue its fight to make the European Union adopt a regulation on the defense of indigenous national communities' rights. The party opened its European Parliament Election campaign at an event held in the local sports hall in Székelyudvarhely. In his speech Mr. Kelemen added that the RMDSZ would fight for its right at the Court of Justice of the EU in Luxembourg, because the civic petition it had formerly presented had been rejected by the European Commission; in addition, the party also wants to strengthen solidarity among European minorities, and is seeking further partners who can help to prove the legitimacy of the party's stance. Mr. Kelemen said that "Brussels must understand that it cannot bury its head in the sand. The freedom of Europe also depends on whether indigenous linguistic and ethnic minorities feel free or not."



### Andrej Kiska becomes President – PM Robert Fico defeated

The second round of the presidential election in Slovakia has caused a great surprise. The majority of analysts had predicted an extremely tight result, though the winner was hard to predict. Shortly after 23:00 (CET) on Sunday the results became public, showing that Andrej Kiska had been voted the next president of Slovakia. Mr. Kiska won by a considerable margin: almost 20%.

Except for those living in the Nagymihályi District/ Okres Michalovce, in the second round of the presidential election more Hungarians voted for the civic candidate Andrej Kiska than for the Prime Minister Robert Fico. According to the official results, Mr. Kiska received the highest number of votes in the southern Slovakian election districts: he received the 92.74 % of the vote in the election district of Dunaszerdahely/ Dunajská Streda and 86.53 % of the vote in the Komárom/Komárno election district. The Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP) has welcomed the election of the new president, and has expressed its satisfaction that Hungarian voters living in southern Slovakia had rejected the policies of Mr. Fico.

### House speaker presents St Stephen Award to ethnic Hungarian Aladárné Tamás

On Thursday in the Knights' Hall of the Vármúzeum in Esztergom, the Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament László Kövér presented Hungary's St. Stephen's Award to Aladárné Tamás, the 102-year-old ethnic Hungarian deprived of her Slovak citizenship. The St. Stephen Medal was awarded to retired priest László Burián, who followed Hungarian Christians deported to the Czech Republic after the Second World War. Before presenting the honor, Mr. Kövér said: "On behalf of the Hungarian state, I promise we shall never forget you and your fellow citizens who share the same fate. Your human perseverance obliges us to make everybody understand and accept that we Hungarians belong together – not against something, but in our own right. We will



do our utmost to make sure it is also understood in Slovakia that we not only share a common past, but also a common future.”



### Viktor Orbán unveils Kosztolányi’s statue in Szabadka

In Szabadka/Subotica, at the unveiling ceremony for a full-length statue of the writer Dezső Kosztolányi, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán spoke of the importance and unifying force of the Hungarian language. The Prime Minister, who arrived in Vojvodina at the invitation of the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (VMSZ), said that “Today the future of the Hungarian nation is a joint responsibility of all the people who consider themselves Hungarians, and we share this responsibility, just like our common language.” In his speech Mr. Orbán said that he would have come to Szabadka even if Saturday had not been the anniversary of Kosztolányi’s birth. The Prime Minister added: “Our culture has always linked us, and whenever I arrive in Vojvodina I always feel I am at home – even though I cross a border on the way. I am grateful to you for this feeling.”

The bronze statue, called “The High-School Student”, was unveiled to mark the 129th anniversary of the birth of the Szabadka-born Kosztolányi. The setting up of the statue was initiated by the Hungarian National Council (MNT), and was supported by the Government of Hungary with a considerable sum of money.

### István Pásztor: 6 April is the day of the nation

On Saturday afternoon, at the open-air rally of the FIDESZ party in Budapest, the head of the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (VMSZ) István Pásztor declared that 6 April is the day of the nation. The President of the VMSZ said that on 6 April people have to decide whether or not they want to continue what they have started and whether or not they are able to unite. The general election on 6 April will show how strong they are, and it will also show whether they can trust each other and take seriously the fact that it is in every Hungarian’s interest for national interests to be strongly asserted. István Pásztor called upon Hungarians living abroad “to vote immediately” and not to wait until the last moment. He encouraged them, saying: “Let’s show ourselves and contribute to making the nation stronger; this is in our interest, since we are part of this nation.” He urged Hungarians living abroad to help their compatriots living in the kin-state, while he asked people living in Hungary to support a more dependable national force – the FIDESZ-KDNP party alliance – because this is “a common interest.”



### Viktor Orbán: safety of ethnic Hungarians in Transcarpathia a top priority

On Wednesday at talks held in the Parliament of Hungary, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and the Vice-President of the Cultural Alliance of Hungarians in Transcarpathia (KMKSZ) László Brenzovics called the safety of ethnic Hungarians in the



Transcarpathian region Hungary's most important priority in connection with the Ukrainian crisis. Mr. Brenzovics – who is also Vice-President of the Transcarpathian (Zakarpattia) Local Council, briefed the Prime Minister about the current situation of Transcarpathian Hungarians and thanked the Hungarian government for the attention it has paid to the region's Hungarian minority. Mr. Orbán and Mr. Brenzovics stated their interest in Ukraine's European integration and in building a strong and democratic Ukraine that provides the widest range of rights to national minorities, including the Hungarian community. The head of the Prime Minister's press office told the Hungarian news agency MTI that, according to the parties, these points are among Hungary's criteria for supporting Ukraine's European integration process.

### The Cultural Alliance of Hungarians in Transcarpathia (KMKSZ) elects new president

On Saturday, at the 25th General Assembly of the Cultural Alliance of Hungarians in Transcarpathia (KMKSZ) in Uzhhorod/Ungvár, László Brenzovics was elected president of the alliance; the former president Miklós Kovács had resigned after 18 years in the post and did not reapply as a candidate for the position. In his welcome address at the forum, Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament László Kövér expressed his appreciation for 25 years of work by the KMKSZ, which has been the most loyal organization of a Transcarpathian Hungarian community living in the Carpathian Basin's most difficult conditions. The Speaker of the Parliament said that "Hungary recognizes the Ukrainian minority living in Hungary as a factor in forming the state; it shall not limit the rights acquired by the community and shall not prevent its cultural, emotional or even legal ties with Ukraine. This is also what we expect from Ukraine, with regard to the Hungarian community living in Transcarpathia." On Saturday the new president of the KMKSZ László Brenzovics told the Hungarian news agency MTI that "The strategic aims of the KMKSZ will not change in the future: the organization's most important objective is to ensure the safety of the Hungarian community in the current, prolonged crisis in Ukraine."

