

# Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

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PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE  
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COMMUNITIES ABROAD

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## Scattered Hungarian communities must be helped to remain Hungarian

Speaking at the opening day of the preparatory week of the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor and Petőfi Sándor Programs, Deputy Prime Minister responsible for Hungarian Communities Abroad Zsolt Semjén said that it is important to offer gestures to scattered communities, in which the goal will be to help them remain Hungarian. In his speech Mr. Semjén said that “the Hungarian nation is a global nation, not because this was so intended, but rather because our history is responsible for this state of affairs: the economic emigration around World War I, followed by multiple waves of emigration, as part of which a great many Hungarians were compelled to leave the country before and after World War II; the flood of refugees who were forced to flee the country after the fall of the 1956 revolution was another great loss of blood; and finally, the defections during the Kádár regime. As a result, Hungarian communities are present throughout the world. The Deputy Prime Minister stressed that the underlying mission has managed to forge opportunities out of historical tragedies and challenges, and to turn negative events into positive developments. In his view, it is the mission of the young people setting out this year again as part of the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor and Petőfi Sándor programs to transform these organizations into formations which serve as a home for all Hungarians. He said that it is also imperative to address those people who are members of the umpteenth generation down the line, and for whom Hungarian identity emerges as “a mere flicker”. The Deputy Prime Minister highlighted that Hungarian communities in the Carpathian Basin and those in the diaspora are closely linked together, because one third of the members – or ancestors – of scattered communities originally came from territories now beyond the borders. He said that the goal is “to create a worldwide network for the Hungarian cause”, and it is therefore necessary to bring together Hungarian organizations and the different parts of the Hungarian community, because this enables the establishment of a complex network which can extend to the entire world.

## Árpád János Potápi: the State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad helps the permanence of Hungarians living in diaspora

Speaking at a press conference at the Apáczai Csere János Faculty of the Széchenyi István University in Győr after the opening day of the 15th training course for Hungarian teachers in the Western diaspora, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi said that his state secretariat is making every effort to help the permanence of Hungarian communities living in the diaspora. The State Secretary mentioned the Kőrösi Csoma and the Petőfi Sándor Programs. He added that as part of the latter program, the participants are strengthening relations between Hungary and Hungarian communities in the diaspora by teaching Hungarian language and culture. Mr. Potápi added that one of the most important aims is to weaken assimilation, and a significant role in this process is played by people teaching Hungarian language, history and traditions to children and young people in diaspora communities.



The training course was organized by the Western European Association of Hungarian County Organizations and was attended by 25 participants from Austria, England, Argentina, Brazil, the United States, Estonia, Canada, Poland, Germany, Spain and Sweden.



### Commemoration in Csíkszentdomokos on the 120th anniversary of Transylvanian bishop Áron Márton's birth

On Saturday a thematic conference was organized and on Sunday a Holy Mass was held in Csíkszentdomokos/Sândominic, the birthplace of Transylvanian Catholic bishop Áron Márton, marking the 120th anniversary of his birth. As part of the series of events, an exhibition was opened in Gyergyószentmiklós/Gheorgheni. The Holy Mass was celebrated by György Jakubinyi, the Archbishop of Gyulafehérvár/Alba Iulia Roman Catholic Diocese. At the end of the Mass State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi delivered a speech. The State Secretary stressed that the best characterization of Bishop Áron Márton was given by Pope John Paul II, who in 1980 wrote that Áron Márton was "the most committed and irreproachable servant of the Lord." Mr. Potápi said that the Áron Márton Memorial Year – which was launched by his state secretariat – has shown that the Bishop can work wonders even today, since a lot of people throughout the world joined the memorial year, and on Sunday (the anniversary of the Bishop's birth) the noonday bell rang not only for the memory of the victorious battle of Nándorfehérvár, but also for Áron Márton, and he was prayed for by Hungarian people from Canada to New Zealand, from Pozsony to Csíkszentdomokos.

### "Vásárhelyi Forгатag" in Marosvásárhely organized for the fourth time

Between 24 and 28 August, for the fourth time the Association for Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureş organized its large-scale event named "Vásárhelyi Forгатag". Speaking at the opening gala, the main patron of the event, the Speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly László Kövér, stressed that "Romania should realize that Hungarians living in this country are an asset rather than a liability, while Hungary is an ally which shares values and interests rather than an enemy to Romania." The House Speaker added that "this realization has happened in Serbia, and the same realization is ripening in Slovakia; we trust that it will happen in Romania, too, sooner or later."

As part of the event series, on Saturday there was the 4th World Meeting of People from Marosvásárhely, which was addressed by State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi. The State Secretary expressed his pleasure that the Vásárhelyi Forгатag and the World Meeting held as part of it managed to mobilize the town's entire civil sphere. He added that the Government of Hungary was pleased to support the event, and he expressed the hope that it will also continue



in the future. Mr. Potápi stressed that the Vásárhelyi Forgotag shows that Hungarians in Marosvásárhely are able to unite their forces and work together for a joint purpose.

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### Hundreds of people attend Ilona Tamás' memorial service in Rimaszombat

On 22 August Dr. Aladárné Tamás Ilona Szőcs died at the age of 104. She was one of the most important representatives of Hungarians living in Slovakia who have been deprived of their Slovak citizenship as a result of becoming Hungarian citizens. During her life, Ilona Tamás became a symbol of persistence and fortitude in the Hungarian community in Slovakia. This is because she was a Hungarian who, after acquiring Hungarian citizenship at the age of 99, she was deprived of all of her rights – an injustice she fought hard against until the end of her life. Ilona Tamás' memorial service was held at the funeral home in Slovakia's Rimaszombat/ Rimavská Sobota. The service for the elderly lady – who was a highly respected teacher, the winner of several awards and the most important figure of the “fight for dual citizenship” – was attended by hundreds of people. These included Deputy Prime Minister for Hungarian Communities Abroad Zsolt Semjén, Hungary's Ambassador to Pozsony/Bratislava Éva Czibalmosné Molnár, Consul General of Hungary in Kassa/Kosice Ádám Szesztay, and many leaders and representatives of cultural, social and political organizations. Prime Minister of Hungary Viktor Orbán sent a letter of condolence, which was read out at the service by Deputy Prime Minister Zsolt Semjén. Earlier Mr. Semjén highlighted in a statement that “Ilonka Tamás' life-work is a testimony to loyalty to Hungarian identity and to the unity of the nation beyond the borders.” President of Hungary János Áder and House Speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly László Kövér also expressed their condolences on the passing of Hungarian teacher Ilona Tamás.

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### The opening of smaller Hungarian classes in Vojvodina is approved

On Friday the Hungarian National Council (MNT) in Vojvodina held a regular meeting, in which one of the subjects discussed was the situation of Hungarian classes with low numbers of students, as well as personnel changes on the boards of Hungarian-language newspapers Magyar Szó and Hét Nap. The meeting focused mainly on the issue of Hungarian classes which operate with low numbers of students. In connection with this, the Hungarian National Council approved requests for Hungarian classes in primary and secondary schools in Vojvodina which have fewer than 15 students being able to operate as independent departments.



## Erzsébet Camps host 440 Ukrainian children studying Hungarian as a foreign language

Dr. István Grezsa, Government commissioner for coordinated development tasks in Hungary's Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county and Transcarpathia, and Ukraine's Ambassador to Budapest Ljubov Nepop visited Ukrainian children studying Hungarian as a foreign language who are attending Erzsébet Summer Camps in Zánka on Lake Balaton. Speaking at a press conference after their visit, the government commissioner said that this year 440 Ukrainian children studying Hungarian as a foreign language and their teachers were given the opportunity to participate in Erzsébet Summer Camps on Lake Balaton, with funding of 24.7 million HUF (EUR 79,000) from the Prime Minister's Office and cooperation with the Association of Hungarian Teachers in Transcarpathia (KMPSZ). Mr. Grezsa stressed that in Transcarpathia more and more Ukrainians are interested in studying Hungarian as a foreign language. He added that this is also due to the fact that the Hungarian-language courses launched recently were accredited by Ukraine's Ministry of Education and Hungarian textbooks for Ukrainians were published with assistance from the Hungarian government. Ambassador Ljubov Nepop expressed her gratitude to Hungary for the organization of the Erzsébet Camps and stressed that cooperation between Hungary and Ukraine is in the national interest of both countries.

