



Mr. Zoltán Balog
Minister of Human Capacities
1054 Budapest, Akadémia utca 3.
Hungary

March 31, 2017

Dear Minister Balog,

The Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies is writing to express our alarm at the proposed legislative changes to the status of the Central European University in Hungary. The Association is committed to academic freedom of inquiry and research and to international cooperation in fostering knowledge, and we are deeply worried that the proposed legislation endangers both.

CEU has a stellar reputation internationally, and is among the most prominent Hungarian institutions on the international stage. It has established itself as a private international university with a global reputation for teaching and research in the social sciences and humanities. It attracts students from 117 countries and faculty from 40. Its programs are both internationally accredited and certified by appropriate Hungarian authorities and it has complied in full with all Hungarian laws.

CEU also makes Hungary a regional leader in winning highly competitive European Research Council grants. Several of its faculty, in fields as various as medieval studies, network and cognitive science, have won the most prestigious awards in their disciplines.

The proposed amendments to Act CCIV on National Higher Education not only endanger the standing a prominent and valued member of the international academic community, but may very well damage Hungary's well-founded international academic reputation, and its relationships to European and North American partners.

We respectfully urge the government to withdraw the proposed legislation and enter consultation with CEU.

Yours sincerely,

Anna Grzymała-Busse, President, ASEES
Michelle and Kevin Douglas Professor of
International Studies, Stanford University

Padraic Kenney, Immediate Past President, ASEES
Professor of History and International Studies,
Indiana University

Julie Cassiday, Vice President, ASEES
Professor of Russian, Williams College

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Eric Naiman, Professor of Literature, UC Berkeley
Lynda Park, Executive Director, ASEES

CC: Viktor Orban, Prime Minister of Hungary;
Office of the Prime Minister;
Central European University