



EAJS

European Association for Jewish Studies

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Kraków, March 31, 2017

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

Dear Minister Balog,

As President of the *European Association for Jewish Studies*, the largest European academic association dedicated to academic Jewish Studies with over a thousand members in all European regions, I would like to express my deep concern about the legislation proposing substantial changes in the status of the Central European University.

We understand that these proposed changes represent a real challenge for the future existence of this outstanding academic institution, which has operated for more than twenty five years, has enriched European academic culture, has served as an center of academic innovation, and has always stood out as a reliable partner of universities across Europe and beyond.

One of the hallmarks of the CEU's operation, academic cooperation with universities and research institutions across Europe, and not in the least in central and eastern central Europe, has contributed considerably to the intellectual and political wealth of our continent. You will be aware that Mr Viktor Orban, Prime Minister of Hungary, himself has enjoyed the benefits of the CEU's academic training.

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In our own field, academic Jewish Studies, the CEU has developed an ambitious programme to train students and academics to the highest international standards. It constitutes an academic brand of considerable value, which the government should not endanger, but protect. Hundreds, if not thousands have benefited from these programmes, and have contributed to make Budapest and Hungary an important academic center, alongside other universities and research institutions which are the pride of your nation.

We would like to express our solidarity with the Central European University and call upon you to reconsider the proposed legislation. To carry through this project would significantly impoverish the Hungarian and European landscape in Jewish Studies, and undoubtedly constitute a major loss also in the many other disciplines in which the CEU excels. It goes without saying that it would also mean a considerable material loss, as our colleagues over the years have been awarded significant amounts in EU research funding.

We respectfully urge the government to withdraw the proposed legislation and enter consultation with CEU, bearing in mind the damage such legislation might do to Hungary's well-founded international academic reputation, to its relationships with its European partners and with the United States.

Yours sincerely,

[signature Professor Edward Dąbrowa]

Professor Edward Dąbrowa. Uniwersytet Jagielloński, Kraków

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