

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

The Faculty of the Department of Philosophy
Stockholm University
10691 Stockholm
Sweden

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Dear Minister Balog,
we, the faculty of the Department of Philosophy, Stockholm University, are writing to express solidarity with the Central European University and to express concern at proposed legislative changes to CEU's status in Hungary. These changes would endanger the academic freedom vital for CEU's continued operation in Budapest and would strike a blow against the academic freedom that enables all universities, including those in Hungary, to flourish.

In twenty-five years, the Central European University 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. The University as a whole is accredited by the US Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), and its masters and doctoral programs are registered by the New York State Education Department (NYSED). Its programs are also certified by appropriate Hungarian authorities, and it has complied in full with all Hungarian laws.

In international rankings, some of CEU's departments are rated among the top 50 in the world. 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. Our own department has long-standing, extremely fruitful and valuable academic connections with the Department of Philosophy at the CEU. The CEU department clearly is amongst the best in Europe, making a significant contribution to the standing of European philosophy in the world. Together with 6 other leading departments in Europe, we were partners in the Marie Curie Actions Initial Training Network *Perspectival Thoughts and Facts* (FP7-PEOPLE-ITN-2008, Project number 238128). During the academic year 2008/9, Katalin Farkas, one of the CEU department's internationally prominent researchers, was an extremely appreciated guest of our department having been awarded the prestigious Kerstin Hesselgren Visiting Professorship by the Swedish Research Council (VR).

CEU is a valued member of the international academic community and its presence in Hungary has added to the reputation of Hungarian academic life on the international stage. The government's proposed legislation to alter its statute of operation in Hungary would compromise its academic freedom and set a dangerous precedent for academic life in other countries.

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,
The Faculty of the Department of Philosophy, Stockholm University, Sweden

Dr. Erik Agner, Assoc. Professor of Practical Philosophy
Dr. Jonas Åkerman, Assoc. Professor of Theoretical Philosophy
Dr. Gustaf Arrhenius, Professor of Practical Philosophy; Director, Institute for Futures Studies; Member Academia Europaea

Dr. Lars Bergström, Professor em. of Practical Philosophy; Member, Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters, Academiæ Regiæ Scientiarum Upsaliensis, Societatis Litterarum Humaniorum Regiæ Upsaliensis

Dr. Gunnar Björnsson, Professor of Practical Philosophy

Dr. Greg (Gergely) Bognar, Assoc. Professor of Practical Philosophy, CEU alumnus (PhD, 2005)

Dr. Stefan Buijsman

Dr. Krister Bykvist, Professor of Practical Philosophy

Dr. Staffan Carlshamre, Professor of Theoretical Philosophy, Head of Department

Dr. Richard Dawid, Professor of Theoretical Philosophy

Dr. Björn Eriksson, Assoc. Professor of Practical Philosophy

Dr. Helen Frowe, Professor of Practical Philosophy; Director, Centre for the Ethics of War and Peace; Wallenberg Academy Research Fellow

Dr. Kathrin Glüer-Pagin, Professor of Theoretical Philosophy; Member, Academia Europaea

Dr. Valentin Goranko, Professor of Theoretical Philosophy

Dr. Gösta Grönroos

Dr. Anandi Hattiangadi, Professor of Philosophy, Pro Futura Scientia Fellow, Swedish Collegium of Advanced Studies

Dr. Sören Häggqvist, Assoc. Professor of Theoretical Philosophy

Dr. Mikael Janvid, Assoc. Professor of Theoretical Philosophy

Dr. Jonas Olson, Professor of Practical Philosophy

Dr. Sara Packalén

Dr. Peter Pagin, Professor of Theoretical Philosophy; Member, Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, Academia Europaea

Dr. Dag Prawitz, Professor em. of Theoretical Philosophy; Member, Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, Royal Swedish Academy of Letters and Antiquities, Academia Europaea, Institut International de Philosophie

Dr. Marcel Quarfood

Dr. Gunnar Svensson, Professor of Theoretical Philosophy

Dr. Torbjörn Tännsjö, Professor em. of Practical Philosophy

Dr. Dag Westerståhl, Professor of Theoretical Philosophy; Member Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences

Dr. Åsa Wikforss, Professor of Theoretical Philosophy

cc: Viktor Orban, Prime Minister of Hungary; Office of the Prime Minister; Lilla Makay, Hungarian Ambassador to Sweden; Central European University