



INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE
VILNIUS UNIVERSITY

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Mr. Zoltán Balog

April 3, 2017
Nr. 270000S-36

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

Dear Minister Balog,

we are writing to express solidarity with Central European University and 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, 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.

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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G. Vitkus', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

Prof. Gediminas Vitkus
Chairman of the Council of the Institute of International Relations and Political Science,
Vilnius University

CC: Viktor Orban, Prime Minister of Hungary;

Office of the Prime Minister;

Central European University