

The Right Honourable The Prime Minister, Victor Orban
The Prime Minister's office
1357 Budapest, pf.6

03 April 2017

From Professor dr Sierd Cloetingh, President

A statement issued by the President of the Academia Europaea (AE) in response to the proposed legislative measures of the Government of Hungary that may affect the status, operations and even the continuation of foreign University institutions that have been established in Hungary, and that will notably impact negatively on the Central European University (CEU).

Sir,

the Academia Europaea is the Pan-European Academy of Sciences, Humanities and Letters. We enjoy a membership of over 3,800 elected scholars who collectively are representative of the leading thinkers and researchers across our entire continent. We are proud to have some 109 elected members who are based in Hungary, including a number from the CEU. This is a mark of the strength and of the quality that the higher education and research system of Hungary is held in by the international academic community.

The presence of institutions such as the Central European University, have become beacons of recognised international quality as both institutions and as educators of leading Hungarian and foreign students, researchers and scholars. Such students make real contributions to the overall added-value of Hungary's investment in its highly educated human capital. The CEU and other such campuses, also make significant contributions to the collective strengths of Hungary's traditionally excellent academic base, as seen from outside of Hungary itself and are also seen from the outside as integral to the Hungarian educational system.

Our express desire as the AE, is always to see excellence supported and academic collaborative endeavour promoted within all the countries of Europe. But, and in the context of the proposed legislation: we regretfully see the latest proposed development as a threat to this aspiration and discriminatory towards specific institutions. We therefore make a plea to the government of Hungary: please pause, and reflect on the possible long-term negative impacts that the proposed legislation may have on a leading centre for scientific excellence and world class scholarship. The presence of CEU is strongly beneficial to Hungary.

As an organisation of individual scholars, we value our Hungarian colleagues' expertise and their international status and we urge the Government of Hungary to safeguard the present system of institutions for the future development of globally excellent scholars.

We are fully supportive of all of the many European and international individual academics, that have already expressed concern about the proposed legislative acts and we also agree with other academic institutions, including many European national academies (including the President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences) and individual scholars that have also



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expressed their concerns regarding negative impacts of the proposed legislation.

We do remain confident that the Government of Hungary will find pragmatic solutions to address any existing administrative or legislative anomalies, without targeting individual institutions or putting at risk excellent science that flourishes in Hungary.

Yours sincerely



Sierd Cloetingh
President
Utrecht



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