

Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf ✉ 40204 Düsseldorf

April 2, 2017

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

Dear Minister Balog,

As scholar and chairwomen of the Association of German Historians (VHD) I do want to express solidarity with Central European University and express deep concern at proposed legislative changes to CEU's status in Hungary. The Association of German Historians is one of Europe's largest Associations in Humanities and represents more than 3000 members. 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.

We have strong relationships with the CEU and benefit from their high expertise in our field. The scholars from the CEU are enriching significantly the discussion and scientific results. 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 many students from Germany who create awareness of the understanding of the Hungarian History and it's important role within Europe and the World.

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,

Eva Schlotheuber

CC: Viktor Orban, Prime Minister of Hungary;

Office of the Prime Minister;

**Vorsitzende des Verbandes der
Historiker und Historikerinnen
Deutschlands**

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Central European University