

2 April 2017

Mr. Zoltán Balog
Minister of Human Capacities
1054 Budapest, Akadémia utca 3.
Hungary
info@emmi.gov.hu

Re: Central European University and Proposed Amendments to Higher Education Law

Dear Minister,

The International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) stands in solidarity with the Central European University (CEU). We write to express our concern about the proposed legislative changes to CEU's status in Hungary. These changes would endanger the academic freedom which is vital for CEU's continued operation in Budapest. The proposed changes would strike a blow against the academic freedom that enables all universities, including those in Hungary, to flourish. They would also damage the Hungarian public sphere as a space for open dialogue and civic participation.

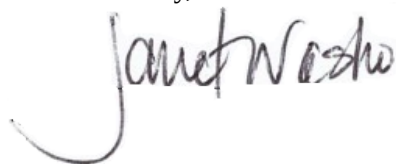
The CEU was founded in 1991 to bridge the Cold War Divide and to promote democracy and uphold human rights in the region through its research and teaching. CEU has established itself as a private international university with a global reputation for teaching and research excellence in the social sciences and humanities. It attracts students from 117 countries and faculty from 40 countries.

The CEU supports important research, teaching and debate about the role of the media in democratic governance and more widely in society. The university has an outstanding record of facilitating international exchange and understanding in these and other areas. CEU faculty are active members of IAMCR and many IAMCR members have participated in CEU events and co-authored publications.

We strongly urge the government to withdraw the proposed legislation that will jeopardise CEU's position as a leading provider of tertiary education and research. We ask the Hungarian government to enter consultation with CEU. The proposed legislation will result in severe damage to Hungary's well-founded international academic reputation if it is not withdrawn and it is a threat to Hungary's commitment to democratic principles and the academic freedom that is required for CEU to flourish.

With more than 2,000 members in 100 countries, IAMCR is the preeminent worldwide professional organisation in the field of media and communication research.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Janet Wasko
IAMCR President

cc. Viktor Orban, Honorable Prime Minister, Office of the Prime Minister, 1357 Budapest, Pf. 6. Hungary,
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