

Dr. János Áder
President, Republic of Hungary
Sándor-Palace, 1014 Budapest, Szent György tér 1-2
1530 Budapest, Pf. 227

Dear President Áder:

The Central European History Society (CEHS), an affiliate of the American Historical Association, strongly objects to the legislation recently passed by the Hungarian Parliament, which undermines the autonomy and intellectual vibrancy of Central European University. We strongly urge you not to sign the new legislation.

Since its founding in 1991, Central European History has effectively forged international scholarly relationships in the humanities and social sciences. It has attracted faculty and graduate students from more than 130 nations, including Hungary. By adhering to its governing principle of fostering open debate and critical thinking, it has established an outstanding academic reputation and has contributed to making Budapest a major center of intellectual inquiry.

By curtailing the right of students and faculty to move freely and even interfering with faculty hiring and admitting students, this legislation will undermine Central European University's academic quality and international reputation. The legislation's demand that, in an impossibly brief time span, it build a campus in the United States to ensure its legal status in Hungary all but guarantees that it will have to shut down. It would be tragic if a university founded in the spirit of cross-border intellectual collaboration after the fall of communism becomes a victim of a misguided nationalism. Hungary and the world will be poorer because of such an outcome.

We very much appreciate your attention to our concerns, and we once again strongly recommend that you not approve this legislation.

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