



**Kultur-, Sozial- und  
Bildungswissenschaftliche  
Fakultät**

Institut für  
Sozialwissenschaften

Der Direktor

To: Petra Kammerevert, Frans  
Timmermans, Tibor Navracsics and the  
German Members of the  
European Parliament

Cc: Support\_for\_CEU@ceu.edu

Prof. Dr. Johannes Giesecke  
Geschäftsführender Direktor

**Datum:** 17. April 2017

Dear Petra Kammerevert, Frans Timmermans and Tibor  
Navracsics, Dear German Members of the European Parliament,

**Bearbeiter/in:**

**Geschäftszeichen:**

As concerned educators and researchers we, the faculty of the  
Department of Social Sciences at Humboldt University of Berlin,  
are writing to express our discontent about recent modifications to  
the National Higher Education Act passed by the Hungarian  
Parliament on April 4, 2017 and signed into law by the President  
of Hungary on April 10, 2017. The new legislation makes the  
continued operation of Central European University (CEU) in  
Budapest nearly impossible and is an extraordinary violation of  
the integrity and freedom of an institution of higher education in  
the European Union. These modifications are discriminatory, as  
several of its passages target only CEU, and it was passed without  
regard to due procedure thereby threatening not only academic  
freedom but also the rule of law in Hungary and the European  
Union.

**Postanschrift:**

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CEU was founded in 1991 by a distinguished group of Europeans –  
including then President of Hungary Arpad Goncz; then President  
of Czechoslovakia Vaclav Havel; Polish historian Bronislaw  
Geremek, who later became Poland's Minister of Foreign Affairs;  
and Hungarian-American philanthropist George Soros – to support  
the transition from Communism to freedom through education. In  
the past 25 years CEU has become an internationally esteemed  
private university, whose reputation in teaching and research in  
the social sciences and humanities is incontestable. With students  
from 117 countries and faculty from 40 – the largest portion of  
whom are from European Union member states – CEU is both a  
European and an American institution with a truly global reach.  
We have many esteemed colleagues and collaborators at CEU and  
it's importance as a center for free academic discourse in Eastern  
Europe cannot be overstated.

We join CEU in strongly contesting the new legislation. CEU has  
received support and expressions of solidarity from all over the  
world, including 20 Nobel Laureates, EU Commissioners, the  
president of Germany Frank-Walter Steinmeier, former U.N.

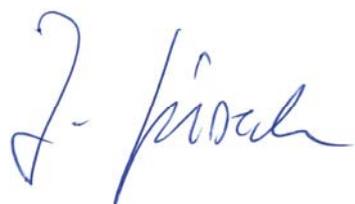
**Verkehrsverbindungen:**

S- u. U-Bhf. Friedrichstraße

Secretary General Kofi Annan, top American universities, including Harvard, Princeton, Yale and MIT, as well as Oxford and Cambridge. Further, CEU has garnered significant local support in Hungary including the President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the major Hungarian universities and largest student organizations. On April 9, 2017, tens of thousands of concerned citizens marched through Budapest in a peaceful protest of the government's actions.

While CEU is seeking all possible legal remedies, the appeals process will take time, and this legislation must be stopped immediately for CEU to continue operating in Budapest. Leaders of European countries, the European Commission, and the European Parliament can and must defend academic freedom and the integrity of universities operating within the European Union. We urge you to act now to do everything in your power to stop this legislation and defend the academic freedom in the European Union.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Giesecke', written in a cursive style.

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Prof. Dr. Johannes Giesecke  
Chair of the Department of Social Sciences  
Humboldt University of Berlin