

Attention: news desks/science and education correspondents
For immediate release
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**European universities call on Hungarian president
to block legislation targeting Central European University**

Members of the European University Association (EUA) – gathered at the University of Bergen on the occasion of the General Assembly and Annual Conference on “[Autonomy and Freedom: the Future Sustainability of Universities](#)” – express their deep concern and shock at the adoption on 4 April 2017 of legislation intended to shut down the Central European University (CEU), one of EUA’s long-standing members.

The bill was passed in spite of CEU’s long record in successfully educating generations of students, promoting critical thinking and advancing research in Hungary. This demonstrates a complete lack of respect for university autonomy and academic freedom, which EUA strongly condemns.

EUA believes that autonomous institutions should be left to govern themselves free of state interference and oppression. Moreover, this is the first time that the government of an EU country seeks to shut down a university in this manner. EUA therefore calls on Hungarian President Janos Ader not to sign this new legislation.

Only in open and democratic societies can autonomy and academic freedom enable universities to flourish and play their role in society. EUA therefore continues to stand by CEU, inspired by the statement of support by the German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier who said that:

“Europe, then, must not be silent, when civil society, even academia - as now at Central European University in Budapest - are deprived of the air to breathe.”

See also:

[“EUA calls on governments to refrain from interference in university autonomy”](#)

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The European University Association (EUA) is the representative organisation of approximately 800 universities in 47 European countries and 33 national rectors’ conferences (NRCs). The EUA Council is made up of the president, the members of the Board, and of the presidents of all of Europe’s NRCs. EUA works closely with its members to ensure that the voice of European universities is heard.