



Norsk studentorganisasjon

To: *The Hungarian Government.*

Copy: *The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, The Norwegian Embassy in Hungary, The Standing Committee on Education, Research and Church Affairs, The Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and The European Students' Union (ESU).*

MODERN ATTACKS ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Adopted by the Central Board of the National Union of Students in Norway, 9 September 2017.

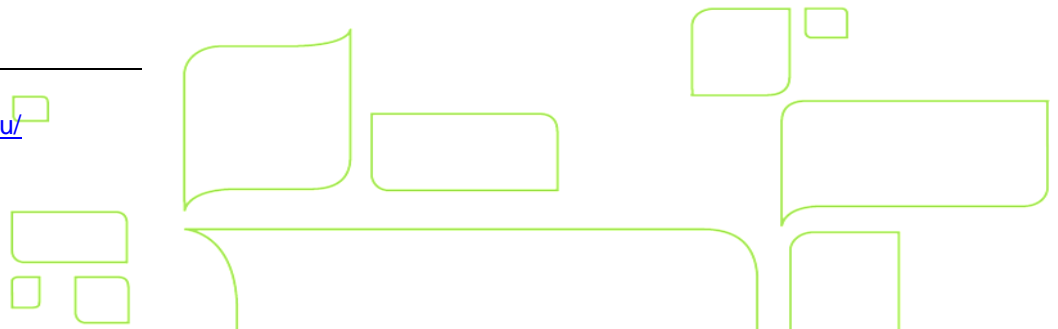
Academic freedom is under threat. The Hungarian government, with Viktor Orbán's party Fidez' in charge, is targeting non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to disband through multiple law proposals that will prohibit such organisations or institutions with foreign funding. Sadly, these days, the same tendencies are visible in many other Western countries. We see this in Russia, where the European university of St. Petersburg lost their teaching licence, and in Turkey, where authorities attacked their own university deans.

The Central European University (CEU)¹ in Budapest, Hungary, are one of the threatened universities in Europe today. CEU is partially financed by American-Hungarian George Soros. The university is organised as an American-style institution and is accredited both in the US and Hungary. It was established in 1991 and hosts approximately 1380 students within disciplines of business, social sciences, law and mathematics. The social science community is ranked in the top 100 tier of the world. However, the whole university is under threat of having to shut down following Hungarian authorities' attack on academic freedom.

Academic freedom is under threat. It seems alarmingly more accepted to meddle with autonomous universities and their academic freedom. This development must be taken seriously. The National Union of Students in Norway (NSO) urge that the academic community continue to display their resistance against these hostile attacks on academic freedom.

NUS Norway fully supports the Norwegian government's decision to withhold EEA and Norway grants until the Hungarian government decides to respect academic freedom. It is now up to other actors to act and support the autonomy of higher education institutions.

¹ <https://www.ceu.edu/>



Furthermore, NSO support the resolution adopted by ESU.²

Students in Norway demand:

- That the academic community continues to display their resistance against current attacks on academic freedom.
- That the Norwegian government continues to withhold grants until the Hungarian government decides to pull back their law proposal, which weakens the position of academic freedom.
- That the Norwegian government and higher education institutions (HEIs) should allocate funds and resources for cooperation in appropriate forms where it can strengthen the position of institutions, people with academic status and those whose academic freedom is threatened.

About the National Union of Students in Norway:

The National Union of Students in Norway (Norsk studentorganisasjon, or NSO in Norwegian) is the largest organisation for students in Norway. Comprising 31 member unions from higher education institutions across the country. The member unions represents more than 230 000 students. NSO's goal is to ensure students' academic, social and economic rights.

www.student.no

² <https://www.esu-online.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/On-the-controversial-law-amendment-on-the-operation-of-foreign-higher-educational-institutions-in-Hungary.pdf>