



## **The Academia Europaea expresses its anxiety at the restrictions now forced upon the operations of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences as well as its estate and the interference with academic freedoms, by the Orbán government.**

The Praesidium of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS) only a week ago, adopted a [resolution](#) calling for the government to continue to make available the full range of resources and to respect the independence that, until now, had been guaranteed in law for the operations of its internationally recognized centres of research excellence.

The Academia Europaea [AE] fully and without reservation supports the expressed will of the Praesidium of the HAS.

However, in the past 48 hours we have learned with mounting sadness and worry, that the situation of the HAS is now significantly more fragile. The continued viability of the HAS itself is now endangered by the inexplicable actions of Minister Palkovics [Minister for Innovation and Technology]. The removal into government control of the research and operational funding and the mooted annexation of the estate of the HAS is in our view unjustifiable on any rational scientific grounds and all too closely presents us with shades of past political regimes. It does not at all project an image of a progressive, modern government of a major EU member state. We condemn this further action.

The HAS is,

- Amongst the most acknowledged scientific institutions of Europe.
- It is a well-known and highly respected European institution that owes its reputation to the excellence of its discovery research network that has made invaluable contribution to European science,
- Its tradition and recently modernised structure makes it one of the best-performing research institutions in the new member states of the European Union.

The AE therefore,

- Highlights the importance of bottom-up basic research funding as an indispensable element of any innovation system
- highlights the fact, that no discovery research network in Europe can operate without a stable and predictable public funding, restrictions on the provision of the annual budget of the Hungarian Academy of Science, that is guaranteed by law, or providing basic operational costs via open thematic calls will cause irreversible damage in the performance and reputation of Hungarian science
- Now calls on the Hungarian government to respect the Haldane principle of science funding adopted by most European governments (decision on science funding can only be made by researchers and not policy-makers)

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- calls to respect academic freedom and refuses government attempts to label any critical scientific research on policy issues (especially in case of social sciences) as political
- Calls on the government to respect the financial, legal and scientific autonomy of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences
- Calls on the government to refrain from enforcing any premature and unfounded plan for re-organisation that goes against the professional advice and approval of the Hungarian scientific community.



The AE is honoured to have 115 elected individual members from Hungary amongst our 4,000 elected scholars. Their peers have judged all of our Hungarian members internationally excellent. Our Hungarian colleagues come from all four classes of scholarship: The Humanities, the Social, Economic, Legal and related Sciences, the Exact Sciences and the Life Sciences. We are proud to express our full support for all disciplines across all subject fields. The AE places equal public value on all of these disciplines and we roundly condemn the Hungarian government proposal to interfere and prohibit Universities' freedoms to teach in those subjects where they do not "fit" party policy. All subjects where there is a demand and where there is a societal relevance should be welcomed by any enlightened government.

The AE is especially pleased to express our full support to the HAS President Professor László Lovász, who was recently announced as the first winner of the International Science prize of the city of Barcelona - The 2019 'HYPATIA' prize for excellence in science and for support for the public values of open scientific excellence. Such outstanding scholars represent the true values of Hungarian science in society.

In conclusion, and at this late hour, we desperately urge the Minister and the government of Hungary to re-consider and to reverse this dogmatic action, for the sake of the future standing of Hungarian research across the international landscape.

On behalf of the Trustees of the Academia Europaea

David Coates  
Executive Secretary

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