

The statement of the employees of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS)

The labour union meeting of the Research Centre for the Humanities, the Centre for Social Sciences, and the Centre for Economic and Regional Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS), convened on the 24th of January 2019 in Budapest, expresses serious concerns about the organizational and financial conditions being imposed on the research institutes as well as about the future of their employees. The radical changes envisaged by the government to research funding, not only threaten the employment of almost 5,000 researchers and non-research staff, but also put in danger the future of the Hungarian scientific community as a whole.

Therefore, we call on the government to:

- 1) Respect the unity and independence of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and its research institutes. The Hungarian Academy of Sciences as a public entity should be entitled to determine its organizational structure and maintain control over its budget.
- 2) Uphold the financing system for academic institutes, including set state funding for maintenance costs, as it is not possible to operate a research institute only through short-term grants.
- 3) Develop a comprehensive science, technology and innovation policy strategy, which details the role, the tasks, the performance assessment system, and the funding methods of publicly funded research institutes in consultation with the research community. Until this strategy becomes effective, HAS research institutes should operate within the organizational frameworks of 2018, and should continue to receive their complete budgetary funding as has hitherto been the case.
- 4) Leave unaltered the academic network. The national and international value of the Academy is certified by ground-breaking research achievements in multiple fields and can only be secured by maintaining the institution's organizational unity.
- 5) Leave professional oversight over the academic institutional network with the Academy. Research performance should only be evaluated through the performance assessment systems developed by the research centres and institutes in accordance with international standards.
- 6) Leave the right to employ staff with the research centres and research institutes. The public servant status of HAS employees and their research contracts should be upheld.
- 7) Leave employees' status and university pay scale unchanged, unless such a change will be to the benefit of the employees.
- 8) Restore the stability of the research institutes and provide competitive wages to employed staff. Internationally competitive research serving the public good can only be carried out by restoring employees' confidence in the stability of their workplaces, and by providing competitive wages for researchers and administrative staff alike.

We request a response to our concerns from the government and its Ministry for Innovation and Technology by the 7th of February. If our concerns are not addressed, we are prepared to take further steps domestically and internationally to call attention to the threat to independent research in Hungary.