

# STATEMENT

## on Hungary's plans to ban Gender Studies

Universities Austria protest against the Hungarian government's proposed law to abolish accredited Gender Studies MA programmes in Hungary, currently offered by the ELTE Faculty of Social Sciences and the Central European University (CEU).

The study of gender in society is acknowledged worldwide as a valid scientific discipline. Several hundred universities offer courses and grant degrees in this field, which develops and presents research on gender inequalities in society and in the workforce, on changing societal gender roles, and on cultural stereotypes connected with gender.

Hungarian Gender Studies programmes participate in European exchange programmes. As a result, this has led to longstanding academic relationships including research and teaching co-operations with Austrian universities that also testifies the excellent academic work of the Hungarian colleagues.

As we learned from the media but also from our Hungarian colleagues, this amendment does not provide any explanations and neglects the critical statement of Hungarian universities.

We are concerned about the Hungarian government seeking to legislate the curricula of universities without relying on the academic expertise of the university institutions in charge. It also sets a dangerous precedent for state intervention in all other university courses.

We therefore call upon the Hungarian Government to refuse this amendment with respect to academic freedom and urge to guarantee the autonomy of higher education.