

EISA Statement on the Hungarian Government's Barring of Gender Studies from University Curricula

The European International Studies Association is deeply concerned about the Hungarian government's proposals to bar Gender Studies programmes delivered in Hungarian universities. We are also deeply troubled by disparaging statements that have been issued about the perceived limited value of programmes and modules that focus on issues of migration, ethnic minorities and LGBTQ rights. The Hungarian Government's proposal has been issued without any meaningful consultation with university staff and students and is therefore profoundly damaging to academic freedom and to the independence of universities. Universities, and their ability to determine their own curricula, are fundamental to the functioning of democracy and engaged citizenship due to their role in advancing knowledge. It is vital in a time when we are collectively confronted with a range of complex and significant global issues that universities are able to equip students and wider society with knowledge that can contribute in meaningful ways to the challenges that we face. Gender Studies, and scholarship covering other important issues such as migration, ethnic minorities and LGBTQ rights, has contributed to the development and delivery of more ethical global policies and practices which have had a positive impact on people's lives around the world. The value and respect that is afforded to Gender Studies globally as a result of this also means that Hungarian scholars could lose access to research and educational funding, which could prove detrimental to higher education across Hungary. Hungarian students could also lose access to international and European study programmes, which could prove detrimental to higher education across Hungary, and to Hungarian society more widely. We therefore urge the Hungarian Government to reconsider its proposals and instead commit to the academic freedom of its universities and all of its scholars.

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On behalf of the EISA Board



Victoria Basham, the EISA President