



August 29, 2018

Dr József Bódis

State Secretary for Education, Ministry of Human Capacities

Budapest

Dear Mr. State Secretary,

On behalf of the Executive and the Board of the European Society for the Study of English, I am writing to you to express our grave concerns regarding the draft decree that proposes to ban MA programs in gender studies for future years in Hungary.

We consider this proposal a serious governmental intervention in academic freedom and the autonomy of universities. Gender studies is an important, growing, legitimate, and fully accepted field of instruction and research in academia all over the world. Programs, workshops, conferences and scholarships are offered by hundreds of universities and research centres in the international academic community, and graduates of these programs are successful in their scientific career, and the job market.

The proposed governmental action is not in line with the principle of academic freedom and it goes against accepted European and international standards. We are afraid that it is going to seriously harm the good reputation of Hungary, and it will endanger the achievements and the prospects of our colleagues.

We would like to urge you to reconsider and withdraw this misguided proposal, and we express our support and solidarity for all affected colleagues, institutes, and universities in Hungary.

Sincerely,

Professor Liliane Louvel

President of ESSE