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CC: Mr. Péter Györkös , Ambassador to Germany

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MASTER DEGREES IN GENDER STUDIES, HUNGARY STATEMENT OF THE GERMAN SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

As has been widely reported in international media, and as we have been informed by colleagues from the scientific community in Hungary, on October 12, 2018, the Hungarian Government removed the two Master degrees in Gender Studies from the list of accredited subjects in Hungary. This happened without any professional review, without further public statement or explanation.

Gender Studies are an internationally valued field of research and academic excellence. Both MA programs at CEU and ELTES in Hungary have a solid record of educating outstanding scholars and professionals. They are both part of an international scientific community, including Eastern and Western Europe, North America, and further regions. In the face of political moves such as this recent decision that mischaracterizes and attempts to undermine the academic legitimacy of Gender Studies, we stress that the concept of gender, as a fundamental component of the human experience, has proven its importance in and across many areas of academic research and teaching for effectively addressing the complex and fundamental questions of selfhood and social relations. Gender is part of the production of knowledge that we all face every day. In this light, Gender Studies focus on dimensions such as Families, History, Tradition, Innovation, Bodies, Power, Politics, Labor, Care etc. In sum: Gender Studies are a legitimate and important field of academic scholarship. And, as such, it is on the scientific community to decide about its excellence and legitimacy.

We, the German Sociological Association, hereby express our deepest concern and vehement opposition to such a flagrant and forceful imposing of restrictions to academic research and teaching. The measure in question represents an unprecedented annulment of a whole academic field in Hungary, which as a member of the EU, must be committed to the core democratic value of academic freedom. We urge you to cancel the decree, and return to a sound policy regarding academia, respecting its freedom in matters of teaching and research.

On behalf of the board of the German Sociological Association,

Munich, October 19th 2018

Prof. Dr. Paula-Irene Villa