

Question for written answer E-002183/2021/rev.1
to the Commission
Rule 138
Katalin Cseh (Renew)

Subject: Fudan University campus in Budapest

My question concerns the construction of a new Fudan University campus in Budapest, a plan supported by the Hungarian Government. I recall that the same government forced the Central European University, a private institution committed to Western values, out of the country. I believe some red flags regarding this case merit our attention if we are to ensure that the EU's foreign policy interests are not threatened.

In December 2019, Fudan University dropped the phrase 'freedom of thought' from its charter and included a pledge to follow the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party – a decision that might result in Chinese propaganda enjoying primacy over free speech at a university within the EU. There are reports of the Chinese state using its public institutions to further Beijing's geopolitical agenda, as they provide an easy way to recruit actors to carry out malign interference activities in the EU and other Western democracies.

1. Will the Commission issue guidelines on how to combat malign interference efforts by third countries?
2. Will it monitor third country entities to see whether their activities threaten the EU's foreign policy agenda?
3. Does it condone the state-sponsored operations of politically exposed third country institutions if such countries have a proven track record in attempting to weaken our European democracies?