

**Question for written answer E-001387/2023  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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**Subject:** Disregard for the opinion of the rectors of Hungary's universities

A letter to the President of the European Commission, written by the rectors of Hungary's universities that have adopted the new model, has come to light stating that, according to the law, the rights and obligations of maintenance are identical, regardless of who exercises them, and that these regulations have been unchanged for 12 years. The rectors point out that there has been no violation of autonomy and that Hungary's legal provisions do not make it possible for the board of trustees to take over the senate's competence on scientific matters. The Higher Education Act unambiguously stipulates that governance may not violate the independence of institutions of higher education, as such independence is guaranteed in questions relating to the scientific subject and content of education and research. In this regard, they emphasise that decisions about the design of a given institution's educational and research strategy are taken by its senate, and that the senate typically elects the rector – the head of the university – from among several candidates. The board of trustees has no say in the university's research and education portfolio. The letter in question was written by the rectors elected by the universities' autonomous senate; they resorted to this action because they were never even consulted before the decision was taken.

1. Where, in this case, are the fundamental democratic values on which the European Union and the European Commission insist so forcefully at other times, or consultation, the application of the principle of 'nothing about us without us', when those affected have been completely neglected and discriminatory decisions taken by means of pressure in a purely political debate?
2. Does the Commission think that the Hungarian rectors are lying?
3. Inasmuch as the Commission does not accept the opinion of the leaders chosen by the universities' autonomous bodies, is that not equally a violation of the universities' autonomy?

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