

## **Opinion of the Slovak Academy of Sciences on the current situation of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences**

The Presidium of the Slovak Academy of Sciences is concerned with the current events around the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. This leading Hungarian scientific institution has lost the statute of a separate budget organization since the beginning of 2019, and the amount and structure of the budget, as well as the release of funds, is decided by the newly established Ministry of Innovation and Technology. This is currently blocking the payment of research funding, and in January 2019 it released only the means to pay basic salaries. The government's proposal to fund academic institutions at the same time assumes that the institutes of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences would have to bid in the form of short-term projects not only for the acquisition of basic research resources but also for institutional means. The basic budget of state and church universities has remained preserved. These decisions were adopted despite the disagreement of the Academy and without consulting it.

We believe that preserving the autonomous status of scientific institutions in terms of the thematic focus of research as well as in terms of the distribution of financial resources is a prerequisite for successful development of science in order to not only contribute to economic growth but also to shape the identity of society in globalization processes. We know from our own experience that attempts to control science and research through political or financial instruments have led not only to the decline of scientific institutions, but also to the stagnation and international isolation of countries, which resorted to similar methods.

Therefore, we share the opinion of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences that basic research cannot develop without stable sources of funding, and scientific organizations must have the right to decide independently, which research areas they will support. The institutions of university and non-university research must have equal access to public resources. We also share the concerns of All European Academies (ALLEA) about possible political abuse of the proposed measures in relation to the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

We are convinced that non-university research has its justification in European countries and particularly in Central and Eastern European countries. Disruption of the existing infrastructure can bring irreversible damage to the region as a whole, and contribute to diminishing the efforts made since 1989 to overcome its lagging behind the developed world.