

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-004698/25
to the Commission
Milan Zver (PPE)
(26 November 2025)**

Subject: Exclusion of Hungarian universities from Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe

In December 2022, the Council endorsed the Commission's proposal to ban new legal commitments with Hungarian public interest trusts under Act IX of 2021 on public interest asset management foundations performing public duty ⁽¹⁾. As a result, 21 universities, with over 204 000 students and 20 000 staff, were excluded from Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe. This restricts academic mobility and access to EU research and education programmes, limiting opportunities for students and damaging the EU's credibility.

1. On what basis did the Commission determine that the presence of politicians on boards of trustees constitutes a rule-of-law breach that affects or seriously risks the sound financial management of the EU budget?
2. Did the Commission identify any specific instances of mismanagement linked to these governance structures?
3. How does the Commission justify applying such restrictive measures within the EU while simultaneously expanding Erasmus+ to non-EU countries with weaker rule-of-law records?

Submitted: 26.11.2025

**Answer given by Mr Serafin on behalf of the European Commission
(18 February 2026)**

The Council Implementing Decision of 15 December 2022 ⁽¹⁾ sets out the grounds for adopting EU budget protective measures, contained in Article 2(1) and (2).

The measures are proportionate and may be lifted once Hungary remedies the deficiencies identified in that Council Implementing Decision.

Under Article 7 of the Conditionality Regulation ⁽²⁾, the Commission must propose adapting or lifting the measures once adequate remedial measures are notified by the Member State.

Following Hungary's December 2024 notification ⁽³⁾ concerning public interest trusts (PITs), the Commission adopted a decision on the reassessment of the fulfilment of the conditions under Article 4, outlining the required adaptations ⁽⁴⁾.

As noted in the Hungary country chapter of the 2025 Rule of Law Report ⁽⁵⁾, an audit of the Hungarian National Bank, its own trusts and a public interest trust maintaining a Hungarian university led the State Audit Office of Hungary (SAO) to file a criminal report against the public interest trust concerned due to identified conflicts of interest.

The SAO found that the decision of the public interest trust to invest in bonds issued by the fund manager of the National Bank's own trusts was in breach of the conflict-of-interest provision of the deed of the Perpetual Investment Trusts.

The measures adopted by the Council in 2022 are aimed at protecting the EU's budget from the risks created by rule of law breaches in Hungary.

Similarly, non-EU countries that seek to be associated to the programme have to respect the rule of law. Otherwise, their association can be terminated.

The Commission continues to be ready to engage with the Hungarian authorities to ensure that all the necessary measures are taken to remedy the situation in line with the requirements of the Council Implementing Decision.

¹ <https://njt.hu/jogszabaly/en/2021-9-00-00>.

⁽¹⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dec_impl/2022/2506.

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TEXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32020R2092>.

⁽³⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/8003e1ad-8e79-4238-bf76-af1fcd2b5efe_en?filename=20241216%20Decision%20on%20PITs%20notification%20-%20EN.pdf (https://commission.europa.eu/document/8003e1ad-8e79-4238-bf76-af1fcd2b5efe_en).

⁽⁴⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/8003e1ad-8e79-4238-bf76-af1fcd2b5efe_en?filename=20241216%20Decision%20on%20PITs%20notification%20-%20EN.pdf.

⁽⁵⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/publications/2025-rule-law-report-communication-and-country-chapters_en.