

# THE EU SCENE: A Central European Perspective

A SYNOPSIS OF THE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION PRESENTED  
BY THE MCC'S CENTER FOR EUROPEAN STUDIES

## PUBLICATIONS

### HORIZON EUROPE VS. HORIZON: POLITICS, AUTONOMY, AND THE FUTURE OF RESEARCH FUNDING

By: **Damille Devenyi & Katalin Deme**

This paper compares the EU's Horizon Europe program with Hungary's HU-rizon initiative, showing how political and socio-cultural conditions increasingly embedded in Horizon have limited participation for several Hungarian institutions since 2023. HU-rizon, launched in 2024, ensures research continuity and international cooperation despite budget constraints. The study argues that the contrast between the two reflects a broader European debate on whether research funding should advance political objectives or safeguard scientific autonomy – a question that will gain urgency as the next EU budget cycle tightens civilian research funding.

Read the full article at: [A New Academic Model: Curbing Ideological Overreach on Scientific Neutrality](#)



### THE RULE OF LAW: A TOTEM WITH A THOUSAND FACETS

By: **Yann Caspar**

Reviewing Ghislain Benhessa's *Le Totem de l'État de droit*, this essay explores how the modern EU has transformed the "rule of law" into a political talisman – a vague, protean concept deployed to enforce ideological priorities. Caspar summarizes Benhessa's critique of how judges, empowered since the 1970s, have expanded their authority far beyond the original intent of constitutional theory, turning the rule of law into an instrument for hegemony, rights-inflation, and political pressure, particularly against dissenting Member States. The review highlights the tension between legality and legitimacy, and the risk of using the rule of law as a tool of coercion rather than balance.

Read the full article at: [The rule of law: A totem with a Thousand Facets](#)

## MEDIA APPEARANCES

- **Hungarian Conservative:** ['Woke Obscurantism' Tackled at MCC Event](#) - Hungarian Conservative – Rodrigo Ballester
- **La Iberia:** [Hungría defiende una paz realista. No es pacifismo, es realismo](#) – La Iberia – Rodrigo Ballester
- **Mandiner:** [Aki Orbánt bírálta, most maga bukik el – a francia elnök politikai vesztét egykori támogatója mondta ki nyíltan](#)– Mandiner – Yann Caspar
- **Brussels Signal:** [If Europeans were in Israel's place, would they defend themselves?](#) – Brussels Signal – Rodrigo Ballester
- **The Washington Stand:** [Trump-Orban Meeting Is Pivotal for Resolving the Russia-Ukraine War](#) – The Washington Stand – Rodrigo Ballester

**Center for European Studies · Európai Tanulmányok Műhely**
**PAST EVENTS**
**THE FUTURE OF ACADEMIA IN THE FACE OF WOKE OBSCURANTISM**
**September 22, 2025**

The Center for European Studies hosted a packed evening at **MCC Scruton**, bringing together scholars and the public for a lively debate on the state of higher education and intellectual freedom. The event featured the presentation of *Facing Woke Obscurantism: Chronicle of a Turbulent Publication* and a thought-provoking panel discussion, “*Ideology vs Knowledge: Is Academia Dying in the West?*”, with **Xavier-Laurent Salvador**, **Rodrigo Ballester**, and **Leonardo Orlando**, moderated by **Yann Caspar**.

[Recap & Photo Gallery](#)

**EU ENLARGEMENT: BALKANS, UKRAINE - WHO SHALL BE NEXT AND WHY?**
**October 16, 2025 | Vienna**

MCC, in partnership with Modul University Vienna, hosted the second session of the Western Balkans First series, bringing together leading policymakers and experts to assess the EU’s competing enlargement priorities. The first panel examined the long-delayed accession of the Western Balkans, while the second focused on Ukraine’s accelerated bid and its far-reaching political and security implications. The conference offered a rare side-by-side comparison of both trajectories and concluded with a standing reception.

[Recap & Photo Gallery](#)

**UPCOMING EVENTS**
**2026 MCC Winter School for International Students**  
**Hungarian Horizons: The Magyar Model in Practice**  
**Budapest | February 8-15, 2026**

CES invites **30 international students** for a 7-day immersion into Hungary’s political heritage, governance model, and cultural landscape. The program features lectures and debates with MCC scholars, visits to key institutions—including the Hungarian Parliament, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Culture and Innovation—as well as a regional trip to Vienna (Modul University) and Győr.

Program Fee: €740 (includes housing, local transport, breakfasts, lunches, cultural programs, and all sessions).

Accommodation: Dean’s Home Budapest.

 [Registration](#)
**The first MCC International Winter School for Foreign Students**

**Budapest, Hungary**  
**February 08<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>**