

Free to Think 2020: Virtual Conference | November 19, 2020

Scholars at Risk invites participation in "Free to Think 2020: Responding to Attacks on Higher Education," a virtual conference marking SAR's 20th anniversary and the release of our annual report, *Free to Think 2020*. The report draws on data from SAR's [Academic Freedom Monitoring Project](#), which documents attacks on higher education between September 1, 2019 and August 31, 2020.



The virtual conference will feature six panel sessions discussing situations highlighted in the report including China and Hong Kong, Yemen, India, Turkey, and recent developments in Europe.

The event will also feature the presentation of SAR's 2020 *Courage to Think Award*, which may be given to an individual or group, including those who have experienced threats personally, those who have worked to assist them, or those who work to promote a wider understanding of, and respect for, academic freedom and related values.

[Program, registration and other information are available on the SAR website.](#)

Scholars at Risk welcomes European Court of Justice ruling in Commission v Hungary ('lex CEU')

Scholars at Risk welcomes the decision of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) which ruled that restrictions imposed by Hungary on foreign higher education institutions in the country are incompatible with EU law. The court found that the 2017 legislation known as 'lex CEU' violates Hungary's commitments under the World Trade Organisation and infringes on academic freedom, as enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Released on October 6, the judgment came as a result of proceedings before the ECJ, challenging Hungary's changes to their laws governing higher education that forced Central European University (CEU) to close most of its operations in Budapest.

According to the court, such changes deprived "the universities concerned of the autonomous infrastructure necessary for conducting their scientific research and for carrying out their educational activities."

SAR's European Director Sinead O'Gorman remarked that "This is an important legal victory for academic freedom in Europe. Together with colleagues across Europe, we must now push for its implementation."

[Read SAR's Full Statement.](#)

Scholars of the Month

SAR scholars are at-risk higher education professionals who exemplify the pursuit of academic freedom, freedom of expression, and university values. If your institution is interested in hosting a SAR scholar, please email apply.scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu.



A Scholar of Business and Management from Turkey

This scholar specializes in organizational behavior, in particular in the health and financial sector. He has several years of teaching and research experience at universities in Turkey, North America, and Africa. He is an active researcher who has authored several book chapters and regional and international peer-reviewed articles in his field, most recently on employee health and satisfaction. He reports facing arrest, harassment and loss of position in Turkey and seeks research and/or teaching opportunities in a safe location beginning immediately. (Turkey 1252)



A Scholar of Political Science and International Relations from Libya

This senior scholar specializes in Arab thought, political transitions, and post-conflict state building. He has over two decades of teaching and research experience at universities and research centers in Africa and the Middle East. He is an active researcher who has authored several books and international peer-reviewed articles in his field. In his recent work, he analyzes political ideologies, state-building, and transitions in the Arab world. He reports threats of violence and arrest, loss of position, and harassment in Libya and seeks research and/or teaching opportunities in Europe and Canada beginning January 2021. (Libya 527)

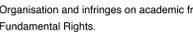


A Scholar of Mechanical Engineering from Syria

This scholar focuses her research and teaching on metallurgy, metal casting, and heat treatment of metals and nonferrous alloys. She has over a decade of university lecturing experience in mechanical engineering and she has authored a number of academic publications in regional journals, most recently on the effects of centrifugal casting with different treatments of alloys. She reports risk due to the general situational conflict in Syria, and seeks research opportunities in Canada beginning February 2021. (Syria 829)

[All Scholars Seeking Assistance »](#)

New Volunteer Proofreader Initiative and Call for Volunteers



To strengthen our efforts to support scholars for the longer-term, SAR is pleased to announce the Volunteer Proofreader Initiative, a proofreading program committed to advancing the academic job search capacity and trajectory of SAR scholars.

SAR invites interested individuals to participate in the new initiative by offering professional, individualized edits and suggestions to CVs, cover letters, teaching statements, and other materials relevant to a SAR scholar's academic job search. Your contributions – in the form of technical edits and/or discipline-specific feedback – will help not only address scholars' immediate proofreading needs but also provide long-term support on the fundamental aspects of the job application process.

We welcome all expressions of interest from SAR members or affiliates, alumni scholars, or those new to SAR. We are particularly eager to work with volunteers who have experience in academia and/or on academic hiring committees. **We welcome all expressions of interest with the aim to offer this service to scholars this November.**

For further information on volunteer qualifications, expectations, and details on how to join, please visit the SAR website and/or view the attached flyer. If you have additional questions, please email [Madoché Bozier](mailto:madochee.bozier@nyu.edu), Protection Services Program Associate, madochee.bozier@nyu.edu.

Remote Fellowships Provide Scholars New, Invaluable Connections to Academia

In response to the widespread [travel restrictions imposed upon scholars from Turkey](#), several universities within our network have mobilized to provide remote fellowship opportunities for SAR scholars who are unable to travel. (In many instances, these remote opportunities have been offered in addition to hosting scholars on campus).

SAR would like to thank [Fernuniversität](#), [Roger Williams University](#), [San Diego State University](#), and the [University of Connecticut](#) for creating remote university affiliations for SAR scholars so that they may access academic databases and continue their research and academic work after long periods—often years—of being shut out of academia. One scholar describes the fellowship arrangement as "priceless," and another noted how the remote fellowship helped them more than they expected, allowing them to teach online courses.

Professional associations are also exploring ways to support scholars remotely. SAR is thankful to the [Middle East Studies Association \(MESA\)](#) for awarding paid, remote scholarships to enable scholars to undertake their research and present their work. To date, MESA has extended its generous support to seven SAR scholars from three countries.

These opportunities illustrate the creative ways in which our network of universities has adjusted to respond to the ever-changing situations of scholars around the globe. The success of these initiatives serves as a reminder that there are multiple ways to assist threatened scholars and while the realities of COVID-19 add new obstacles to university access, we are encouraged that our network has been able to adjust and respond creatively to support scholars around the globe.

Any universities interested in learning more about remote opportunities for SAR scholars are invited to [read more here](#) and contact SAR Program Officer Shreya Bahara at shreya.bahara@nyu.edu.

Inspireurope Mapping Project

On 3 November 2020 at 2pm CET, the Inspireurope project, coordinated by SAR



Europe, will launch a new report: "Researchers Supporting Researchers at Risk at Risk: Mapping Europe's Response". The report, authored by the European University Association, a partner in the Inspireurope project, identifies the support structures and measures available to researchers at risk in Europe, as well as gaps and opportunities for future support. The report is the result of engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, including researchers at risk, higher education institutions, NGOs, networks, and many others dedicated to supporting researchers at risk. Registration will open in the coming days [here](#).

The report finds that the top two obstacles currently facing Europe-based researchers at risk are: (1) the shortage of funding for fellowships or positions specifically for researchers at risk and (2) the overall competitiveness of the research labour market in Europe. While there are three state-funded programmes in Europe that provide direct support for researchers at risk (Finland, France, and Germany), the report highlights the need for a dedicated European-level fellowship mechanism for researchers at risk. An annex to the report will outline dedicated fellowships/placements and additional resources in Europe for researchers at risk. These resources can be found on the [SAR Europe website](#).

The Inspireurope project would like to thank all those who participated in consultation processes for the mapping report. For more information on the Inspireurope Mapping Report launch on **November 3rd at 2pm CET**, please see the [events section on the SAR Europe website](#).

Remembering Yuri Orlov

Scholars at Risk joins the international scientific and human rights communities in celebration of the life and work of Soviet physicist and dissident Yuri Orlov. On hearing of Orlov's passing, SAR's Rob Quinn shared this memory:



As some of you who were there may remember, Yuri spoke at SAR's founding conference in 2000.

Yuri was a true scholar. In conversation at the conference he told me he had written four papers while in the Soviet gulag. I told him I was surprised they gave him paper to work on while in prison. "They didn't," he said, tapping his forehead. "I wrote them in here."

He was also a dedicated dissident-activist. At the conference's post-event dinner I heard him speaking to a colleague who had missed the conference. Upon learning that he was a physicist, she asked him "where exactly is the intersection between physics and human rights?" I will never forget his answer, which perfectly captured what SAR is all about: "Jail."

Events



SAR Greece Section Building | October 12, 2020 | Virtual

SAR Europe in cooperation with the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, will hold an online meeting on developing a Scholars at Risk (SAR) section in Greece for interested higher education institutions, NGOs, government representatives, and individuals.

[Register Today »](#)



SAR Italy Speaker Series | October 15, 2020 | Virtual

SAR Italy invites you to their first autumn speaker series. Professor Aslı Vatasever from Humboldt University and University of Padova will discuss her newly published book 'At the Margins of Academia. Exile, Precariousness and Subjectivity.' The event will be chaired by Prof. Claudia Padovani, University of Padova, and Prof. Magdalena Kmak, Abo Akademi Finland, will act as discussant.

[Register Today »](#)



SAR United States: All Your Hosting Questions Answered | October 21, 2020 | Virtual

In this live webinar, experienced university hosts within the SAR United States network will share their perspectives, lessons learned, and best practices for hosting scholars at their respective institutions (public and private). Most importantly, presentations will be followed by an open Q&A session, where participants are encouraged to ask any and all questions relating to hosting.

[Register Today »](#)



Academic Publishing for Researchers at Risk | October 21, 2020 | Virtual

This webinar will provide an overview on academic publishing for researchers at risk, including guidance on the style of writing for academic publications as well as advice on how to get published.

[Register Today »](#)



NASRIN - Film Screening & Panel Discussion | November 5, 2020 | Virtual

NASRIN is an immersive portrait of one of the world's most courageous human rights activists and political prisoners, Nasrin Sotoudeh, and of Iran's remarkably resilient women's rights movement. This film screening will be followed by a panel discussion with Professor Homa Hoodfar (Concordia U) and Hon. Irwin Cotler, PC, OC, OQ, moderated by Professor Vindia Narain (McGill U).

[Register Today »](#)



SAR Ireland Speaker Series | November 6, 2020 | Virtual

SAR Ireland invites you to a virtual roundtable discussion regarding the renewed attacks on academic freedom in the wake of the pandemic. This network-wide webinar, sponsored by Scholars at Risk Ireland, will explore these attacks in several different contexts, including Turkey, China, India and elsewhere, drawing on individual presentations and a concluding panel discussion. Contact [Anthony Soares](#) or [Rowena Paschenino](#) to learn more.

Security and Risk Management in Higher Education: Protecting Universities from Hostile Actors | November 11-12, 2020 | Virtual

Political and public interest in security-related risks and the threat of interference is growing. UUK is publishing new guidelines on these issues in October 2020, and this two-day online conference will explore the topic in-depth. One panel will look at how institutions can protect the academic freedom to discuss and investigate topics which may be challenging, whilst ensuring appropriate safeguards remain in place.

[Register Today »](#)

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[Learn More »](#)

Inspireurope webinar on Hosting Researchers at Risk: How employers and hosts can help researchers make the most of their stay | December 9, 2020 | Virtual

On December 9th at 10am CET, the Inspireurope project will host the next webinar in its series on preparing the work environment for researchers at risk with a focus on the ways in which employers and hosts can help researchers make the most of their stay. This webinar is free of charge but registration is required.

[Learn More »](#)

Connect with Us

Scholars at Risk is an independent not-for-profit corporation, hosted at New York University. Our international network of institutions and individuals shares a mission to protect threatened scholars, promote academic freedom, and prevent attacks on higher education communities around the world.

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