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Authorities Take Over European University's Building in St. Petersburg

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The European University in St. Petersburg (Yevgeny Asmolov / TASS)

One of Russia's leading universities was forced to hand over its main campus building to the authorities after losing the latest stage in a battle to keep its license.

The European University in St. Petersburg has been repeatedly denied a teaching licence after losing it in mid-2017 over minor building code violations. Critics say the private post-graduate school for the social sciences and humanities is being targeted for political reasons.

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The university was forced to give up its main building to the authorities in late December, its chief of staff, Alla Samolyotova, was cited as saying by the Interfax news agency.

The Small Marble Palace, built in the Italian Renaissance architectural style in the 19th

century, had housed the university since its founding in the mid-1990s.

Municipal authorities said they had no maintenance complaints after taking over the building, Samolyotova said.

Local media report that the vacated palace will house a new digital technology academy.

The European University in St. Petersburg has said that it will renew efforts to obtain a new license in late February.

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