

Students and Youth continue to fight responsibly against COVID-19

The **National Council of High School Students (CNE) National Alliance of Student Organizations in Romania (ANOSR)** and the **Romanian Council of Youth (CTR)** urge the pupils, students and youth to **remain responsible** in the period after the State of Emergency (starting from May 15th) that was decreed to limit the effects of the COVID-19 outbreak in Romania.

It is necessary, in addition to responsibility, **to show solidarity**. Thus, we salute young people and youth organizations who have been involved in the community in order to limit the spread of the virus and to reduce the negative effects caused by it. Actions such as participation in the educational act, involvement in the community by offering support to vulnerable categories of people and to those who are in the "front line" and respecting the **#StayHome** slogan are just some of the ways in which young people have become visible at national level.

CNE, ANOSR and CTR encourage young people to have an **adequate civic conduct**, even if there will no longer be declared State of Emergency in Romania. Thus, the three structures urge young people to:

- strictly obey the rules of personal hygiene and the use of protective face mask;
- maintain social distance and avoid crowded areas;
- avoid unjustified and unnecessary travelling outside their city of residence;
- stay home if having symptoms of flu or cold (cough, fever, breathing difficulty) and call the family doctor for advice;
- continue to engage in volunteer activities meant to limit the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus or to support and promote such initiatives within their communities;
- allocate enough time to the learning process;
- be informed from official sources only and avoid news containing exaggerated and alarmist expressions or those promoting natural, homeopathic and drug treatments against COVID-19;
- adopt an appropriate civic conduct when carrying out outdoor activities and not to be in a group of more than 3 persons.

Lately, at the level of some of the local communities, the populist speech has prevailed at the disadvantage of citizens. We strongly condemn all the **actions of politicians** whose objective was not to guarantee the safety of citizens and their participation in the education processes, but to **strengthen their personal image for electoral purposes**. During these times of crisis, pupils, students and young people in Romania need a responsible political class, which would develop policies for the benefit of citizens.

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Thus we appeal both the **Ministry of Education and Research** and the **Ministry of Health** to guarantee the necessary safety conditions for the high school students, most of them future university students, who will take the **national exams** in the upcoming weeks. Central and local public authorities need to coordinate their resources in order to **ensure that these examinations will be conducted in optimal conditions.**

At the same time, we are waiting for a more vigorous response from the **Ministry of Youth and Sports**, in order to provide **real support to the youth structures and informal groups of young people.** We appreciate the openness shown in this regard, but we hope to see as soon as possible that concrete measures are taken for the benefit of the non-governmental sector and the groups of volunteers made of and/ or dedicated to young people.

We are highlighting again the fact that, even during this crisis, **pupils, students and young people must be listened to** and **local public authorities** must capitalize the **participation of citizens in the decision-making process**, using online resources. The Coronavirus outbreak is not a reason to deprive citizens of the right to participate in their communities. Therefore, online audiences, advisory boards on youth issues and public debates organized in the online environment must become a reality, because **we need to be listened to, not just heard.**

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