

## The interest in education is shown by the funding! Student proposals for the State Budget Law 2021

In the context of the preparations for the State Budget Law for 2021, **ANOSR submits to the Government and Parliament the students' requests on higher education funding for 2021 and asks them to prove that education is a real priority**, as it was constantly declared during the elections campaign for the parliamentary elections.

**Higher education suffers from chronic underfunding**, established mainly after the economic crisis of 2008. We are disappointed to find that, despite the economic growth after 2008, **higher education funding has not yet reached levels at least comparable to those of 2008**. The previous governments only started the modest increase in higher education funding in 2014.

The effects of this disinterest are reflected in low performance compared to other EU Member States. **Romania ranks last in terms of the percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) allocated to education**, while **only 25.8% of young people aged 30-34 have got to study in higher education**, compared to the European average of **40%**, although studies show that adults without higher education degrees are twice less likely to get employed, or to have access to basic social services, participate in democratic life and develop a sense of social cohesion.

Given the acute situation we are in, we recall the following: **Romania is on the penultimate place, in front of Greece, in spending per student in the standard of purchasing power, and European statistics show that 38% of Romanian students say they have moderate financial problems**. The capacity of accommodation in dormitories has decreased in the last 15 years by 13%, despite the new promised places, and the direct expenses subsidized by the state with career counseling and guidance activities are less than 26 lei/year/student (equivalent of 5.33 Euros per year, per student), although only 37 % of Romanian students (the lowest percentage in the EU) consider that they have good chances of employment after graduation.

Also, Romania, along with Bulgaria, is a modest innovator, with **an innovation performance below 50% of the EU average score**, and ranks last in EU countries. We also notice Romania's deficient results in research in the Global Innovation Indicator, where Romania ranks 46th in the world, with only 35.95 points out of 100.

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These are just some of the alarming signals that draw our attention to the situation in the higher education system in Romania. Among the ANOSR proposals on the State Budget Law for 2021, we mention:

- **Increasing the student scholarship fund**, guaranteeing the increase of the amount of scholarships (necessary increase also approved by the National Council for the Financing of Higher Education), while maintaining the current number of scholarship holders;
- **Increasing the subsidy for dormitories and canteens**, in order to ensure the improvement of students' living conditions;
- Establish a separate grant **to fund the activities of Career Counseling and Guidance Centers** in order to increase student employability and flexibility in the labor market;
- **Ensuring free access to the services of the Central University Libraries** by subsidizing the subscription, according to the legislation in force;
- The substantial increase of the investment fund allocated to the Ministry of Education, in order to allow the **improvement of the endowments of the Romanian universities**, far from being comparable with the European ones.

The ANOSR requests imply an increase of the higher education budget by 5,687,470,734 lei (equivalent of 1,166,780,33.16 Euros), following that **the total targeted budget will reach 1.006% of GDP**. We also reiterate the need for adequate research funding of 1% of GDP. Although the higher education system requires a profound reform of funding and resource management mechanisms, they will not be able to make a significant impact in the absence of the necessary resources.

[You can find here all the ANOSR proposals for the State Budget Law for 2021.](#)

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