

ANOSR's #coRector Campaign - Correct the universities!

Press release:

The **National Alliance of Student Organizations in Romania (ANOSR)**, the students' representative structure that has always advocated for a qualitative educational process and optimal conditions for students, that should be assured by universities in Romania, launches the **#coRector** campaign. As during this academic year there will be elections for the position of rector in higher education institutions, through this campaign we ask the candidates to assume that they will implement during their mandate **17 objectives that represent the students' needs**.

Thus, all the candidates for the position of rector are invited to **assume the objectives proposed by ANOSR**, by including them in their management plan and in the university's strategy for the 2020-2024 mandate.

Despite the fact that **students should be considered as equal partners of the academic community**, the findings at national level regarding the ongoing mandate have once again shown that the attention of universities has focused mainly on meeting the needs of teachers. As evidenced by a previous report conducted by ANOSR, only **17.5% of the rectors turned their attention in their management plans on combating university dropout, an essential aspect for the higher education system in Romania**. In addition, only 12.5% of the actual rectors' managing plans include information regarding the review of curricula. Furthermore, only **20% of the rectors considered the increase of students' Career Counselling and Guidance Centers funding** (with the condition that the number of activities for students would be increased) and increase of contribution for scholarships from university's own funds. Thus, we are disappointed to note the reduced importance given to the aspects that concern students, considering that they are the direct beneficiaries of education. Therefore, we highlight the need to prioritize the **17 objectives that ANOSR brings to the attention of the candidates to the position of rector**.

We would like to remind the public that **students claim for inclusive universities which respond to their needs**, which are guided by the principle of fairness, having internal regulations harmonized with national law and which stimulate the acquisition of skills, abilities and aptitudes in non-formal contexts. **Due to the low interest given to students with different types of disabilities**, which prevents them from pursuing higher education, **we propose alternative admission and evaluation methods**, adapted to their needs and **proper training of teachers in order to facilitate interaction with them**. At the same time, we are requesting investments in all the universities, so that the infrastructure meets the needs of all students, including those with different disabilities.

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Another area that we believe that should be prioritized is academic ethics, which is why **we support the development and implementation of mechanisms to prevent violations of different ethical principles** and to offer students free and unrestricted access to similarity checking software programmes thus encouraging the writing of original research papers and combating plagiarism.

On the other hand, **ensuring the stability and predictability of study fees, the optimization of institutional transparency, but also the involvement of students in research activities**, are other desires that should be considered by future rectors. In addition, in order to create an optimal development environment for students, there should be implemented **mechanisms that would improve internships, abolish bureaucracy and assure accessibility to learning resources**. Finally, because the investment in education proves to be defining the development of the society, we ask for a higher degree of interest in providing material support for domestic students applying for international mobilities, defining systemic objectives for obtaining grants and organizing project writing competitions in order to reward innovative ideas of students in the field of entrepreneurship.

The proposed objectives represent the conclusions of the workshops of the XIVth edition of the Forum of Student Organizations of Romania (FOSR), held in Timișoara, between the 5th and 14th of August 2019, which brought together over 500 student leaders from all over the country. Afterwards, these objectives were brought to the final shape by the Governing Board of the alliance together with the presidents of the local unions, during the vision meeting held between the 29th of August and 3rd of September, with the purpose of establishing the student movement strategy and the guidelines for the following academic year, but also on medium and long term.

Thus, ANOSR proposals for candidates for the position of rector are:

- A legitimate financial support system, in accordance to the students' needs;
- An educational system centered on students as direct beneficiaries;
- Adequate accommodation and study conditions;
- Functional and efficient Career Counseling and Guidance Centers;
- An inclusive environment for students with different types of disabilities;
- Involvement of students in all decision making processes that concern them directly or indirectly;
- Developing a culture of ethics and academic integrity;
- Usage of online and digital tools in the teaching processes and aspects of student life;
- Implementation of an updated and effective teacher training system;
- Procedures and mechanisms for stimulating and supporting national and international academic mobilities;

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- Context for the fruition of the resources and the activity of the Student Entrepreneurial Societies;
- Establishing fees in a transparent manner;
- Transparency of decision making processes within universities;
- Methodologies and mechanisms for stimulating volunteering activities;
- Mechanisms for stimulating and involving students in research activities.

The **#coRector campaign is an initiative of ANOSR**, which aims that the students' needs would be treated responsibly, by publicly assuming these proposed 17 objectives and their introduction in both the managerial plans and the university's strategy for the following mandate 2020-2024 by all candidates. Thus, we invite the student organizations and student representatives from the country to support the objectives of the campaign, and to ensure that the future rectors will take into account the students' opinions and proposals.

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