ANOSR supports the proposal of banning the increase of scholarship fees and other taxes perceived by HEIs

The National Alliance of Student Organizations in Romania (ANOSR) supports the draft law BP167/2020, regarding the prohibition of increasing all university fees during the State of Emergency period and during the academic years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. We also urge the decision-makers to support the rapid adoption of this law project. We consider that in the current situation, it essential that higher education institutions demonstrate an efficient university management without making students accountable for additional expenses.

The Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) health crisis has caused major losses worldwide, but we note that each state is taking the most consistent measures to limit the spread of the virus. At the same time, these measures will have serious consequences for the economy and individual financial well-being. According to the OECD Report on the effects of the Coronavirus, the spread of the virus on a large scale can cause the global economy to slow down to 1.5%, half the expected value before the outbreak, with worldwide repercussions.

The economic crisis due to the pandemic will heavily affect the financial situation of students and their families. Most likely, students will no longer have the possibility to pay for current fees, much more, the increased ones. These circumstances will require special financial support measures, both from the Government and higher education institutions.

Higher education is a public responsibility and at the same time it is governed by European values such as social equity. It is unacceptable for universities to raise any kind of fees in the current crisis.

However, there are universities that have already proceeded to raising their fees in this unfavorable context. Thus, ANOSR supported the request of students’ representatives within the Faculty of Law from University of Bucharest, who militated for the rejection of tuition fees increase by the university Senate. Although the first proposal was rejected by the University of Bucharest’s Senate, the second proposal, which implies indexing tuition fees with the inflation rate, was accepted, thus causing an inappropriate precedent.

Considering the above-mentioned circumstances, we fully support the draft law BP167/2020, which provides an amendment to the Law of National Education no. 1/2011, by prohibiting the increase and indexation with the inflation rate of all taxes perceived by universities during the state of emergency and during the academic years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. ANOSR appeals the decision-makers and higher education institutions to support this legislative initiative and its urgent adoption.
"Such measures can be considered as a <safety net> for future generations of students. Decision-makers should not forget that Romania is still at the bottom of the European rankings regarding the rate of graduates of higher education studies, and a cap of taxes in the next period will encourage citizens to pursue university studies in order to obtain new qualifications that would finally provide better paid jobs. I am convinced that universities can find alternative financial strategies, without burdening students with higher fees, to cope with a possible financial decline" - Petrișor-Laurențiu ȚUCĂ, President of ANOSR.