Romanian Educational System during pandemic crisis

#StayAtHome

SCHOOL CLOSED

Measures taken in education during pandemic crisis

March 2020

- classes are suspended at national level;
- online educational activities are recommended;
- carrying out educational activities in collaboration with the Romanian Television - "Teleschool".

April 2020

- online educational activities are mandatory until the end of the school year.

May 2020

- mandatory measures are established for: carrying out specific activities for the end of the school year; training activities for students who will take national exams; organizing national exams; and other preparatory activities for the start of the next school year.

June 2020

- school situations are completed in compliance with the Ministry of Education specifications;
- organizing national exams:
• for the 8th grade students: written tests -15-18 june 2020, final results - 27 june 2020.
• for the 12th/13th grade students: tests-22-25 june 2020, final results - 5 june 2020.

Actions and measures implemented in schools

Some general measures were taken with the following purposes:
- ensuring the health of pupils and teachers, as well as the entire population;
- organizing national examinations in safe and hygienic conditions;
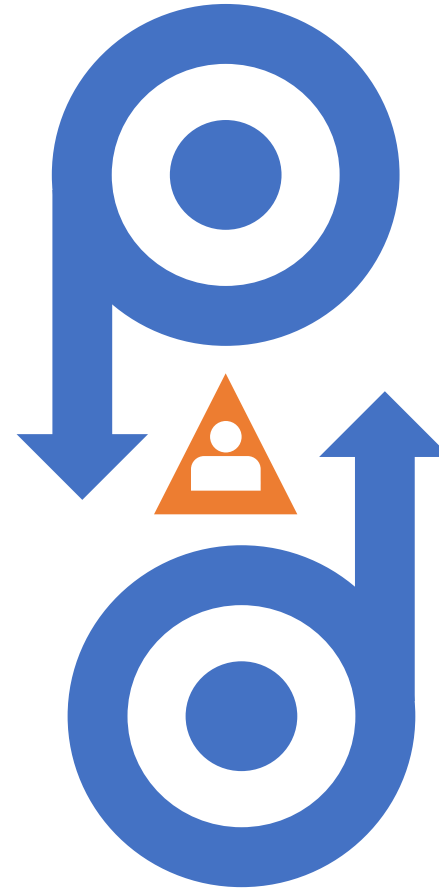- starting the activity of the new school year in optimal conditions.

Actions and measures at school level

- measuring the temperature of staff and students at the entrance;

- mandatory delimitation and proper signaling of access through the school yard and in the school building;
- providing protection materials and equipments (disinfectant mats, protection masks, hand sanitizers, etc.) for all people entering schools;

- limiting the duration of the activities carried out with students in the classroom (2-4h) and staggering breaks in order to prevent large gatherings of students;

- individualized desks and the graphical representation of their location at the entrance in the class;
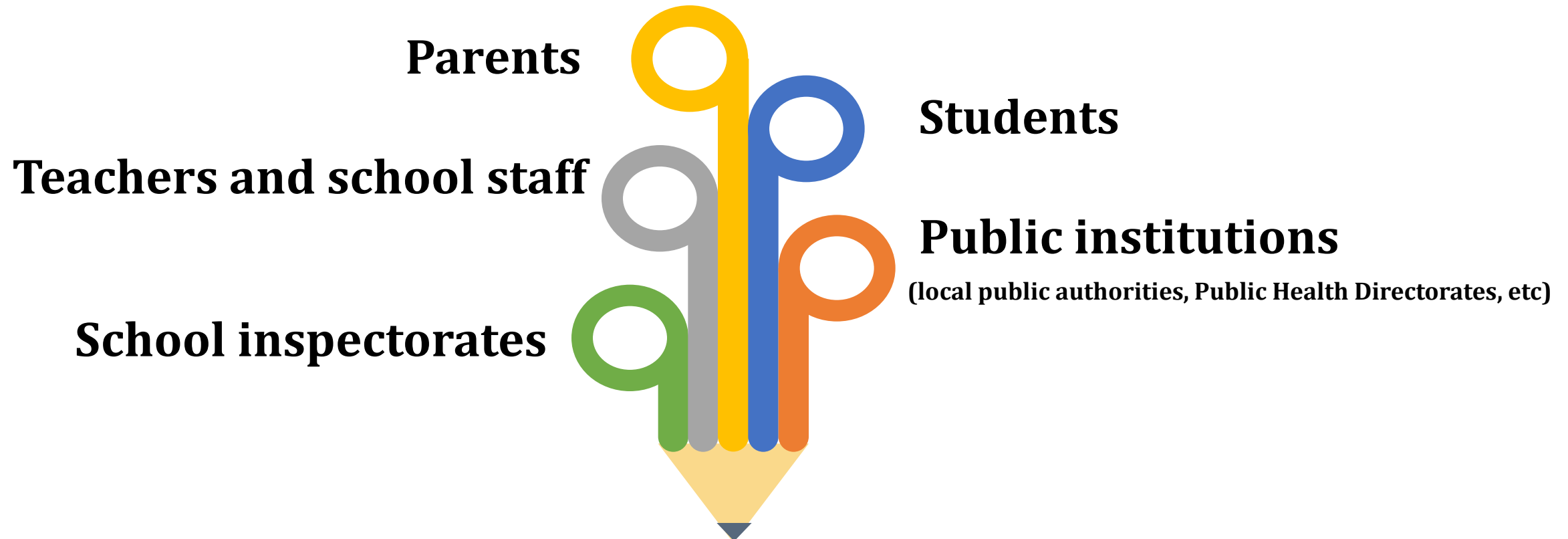
Financial implications for the educational system

❖ The salary rights of the staff were not affected.

❖ The Romanian government continues to provide basic school funding for students for the period when the classes were suspended. Funding is based on and within the standard cost per student, according to the methodology of the Ministry of Education and Research.

❖ The Ministry of Education and Research purchased and distributed to schools protection masks for students, teachers and staff involved in schools activities.

❖ School units, in collaboration with local public authorities, provides hygiene and protection materials and equipment (disinfectant mats, disinfectants, soap, paper towels, special waste collection sites, other biocides for disinfecting the school, etc.).

Accountability of headteachers

In order to fulfill their responsibilities, headteachers must constantly consult:
- teachers' council;
- representative council of parents / students / parents' association;
- representatives of trade unions;
- local public authorities,
- representatives of economic operators involved in supporting vocational and technical education.

Parents

Students

Teachers and school staff

Public institutions

(local public authorities, Public Health Directorates, etc)

School inspectorates

Survey: Pupils', parents' and teachers' perceptions of daily (online and offline) activities during self-isolation (1)

Objectives and purposes

Identifying the respondents' frame of mind; ways of organizing the daily program; the perception of the adaptability - characteristics of online learning activities - ability to accommodate, adapt and prepare for online teaching & learning.

Participants

33.505 students (from 2nd – to 12th grade), 34.791 parents and 4.505 teachers

Reference period: 1- 15 May 2020, Bucharest

Survey results (2)

22% of students and 26% of parents stated that during this period the concentration skill has been greatly affected

40% of teachers are reluctant to evaluate their own ability to adapt to online learning activities

36% of students consider that online learning is less friendly than face-to-face learning

Online learning activities were appreciated by about 40% of students and parents, as being well organized, useful, interesting, but also tiring

In case of repeating the experience, 39% of students, 44% of parents, 45% of teachers consider that they will be well prepared and will manage the situation better

40% of teachers agree that organizing online teaching and learning activities involves professional and personal development by learning to use various educational platforms

Motivating students (and parents) to participate in various learning-counselling activities (learning comes first even in pandemic because it generates the best solutions)

Keeping students, school staff and community members alert and informed about the specific issues related to the new virus and how it reshapes our entire life (and not letting them become victims of disinformation and misinformation)

Maintaining students' wellbeing in order to help them pass the upcoming final exams (after graduating the 8-th and 12-th grades), including encouraging them to be in touch with each other

INOVITAVERDE
as NGO providing non-formal thematic workshops to pupils and parents (EU project "School of Joy" under implementation)
during pandemic crisis (March–June 2020)

MAJOR CHALLENGES

INOVITAVERDE during pandemic crisis (March–June 2020)

SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

• online workshops via Zoom (human rights & democracy, chemistry & green energy, entrepreneurship & initiative, health & sports and others) and posts *via* Whatsapp & Facebook (information about the topics of the workshops, the current crisis, cultural & educational events).

• counselling students and parents regarding the importance of education even during coronacrisis.

• checking students' frame of mind and concerns at the beginning of each activity, allowing them to tell several personal news/recent experiences and using these in the learning activities.

• valuing students' wishes and experinces in various learning activities (giving them many opportunities to be the authors of their own learning).

• running cooperative learning activities, using peer education/each one teach one method.

• explaining and promoting the basic rules – recommendations - guidelines issued by our authorities during the Coronavirus crisis.

• analysing the conflicting values (human rights/freedoms vs. individual/community security-public health etc.) and giving examples of how decision makers weigh these components when they pass or enforce laws in a democracy.

• learning about manipulation, misinformation, disinformation etc./how to find true information through practical examples and games.

• listening to music, watching fun videos, satirizing various news subjects.

• putting things in context, showing students the bigger/whole picture in order to understand that there are solutions for almost all problems and passing an exam is the best way to measure if you are capable to work at the next level.

INOVITAVERDE during pandemic crisis (March–June 2020)

WHAT WORKED / WHAT DIDN'T WORK

Some students enjoyed the new methods (working with information from the Internet, playing video games, searching specific sites) and ask interesting questions.

Students obeyed the rules and recommendations, in general because they understood the disease is serious.

They were aware of the big amount of manipulation etc. Some student were willing to share their problems and questions with us.

Students enjoyed looking for good news/nice things on the internet and presenting them to their peers

They rarely fulfilled the trainers' request. In general, they did a very small part of the project.

Students did not have patience to analyse things deeply or to look for the second/third reason/ explanation/solution.

They did not see the long term effects of their decisions.
They do not use safe/checked information sources.
Students rarely help and inspire one another.
They are not very curious to find out new approaches etc.

INOVITAVERDE during pandemic crisis (March–June 2020)

LESSONS LEARNED AND IDEAS FOR POST-CORONA EDUCATION

Helping students to make connections / think logically is a priority

Every educational activity must start from the perception & level of each student (guessing is risky)

Students need as many opportunities to understand how school shapes their lives as possible

More outdoor & community based activities and more problem solving approach are needed

Necessary changes in the educational system

The transition to online school involves more than meetings through audio-video platforms or homework sent through various applications

Rigorous school preparation for digital teaching & learning

Permanent improvement of teachers and students digital skills

Changing/adapting the curriculum for the online learning and integrating the blended learning system

School resources for purchasing equipment, other materials needed to support the online teaching-learning activities

Proper regulation for online teaching-learning process

Development of free ICT programs and software to support the online teaching-learning process

Advantages and disadvantages of online education

Discovering new methods for teaching - learning
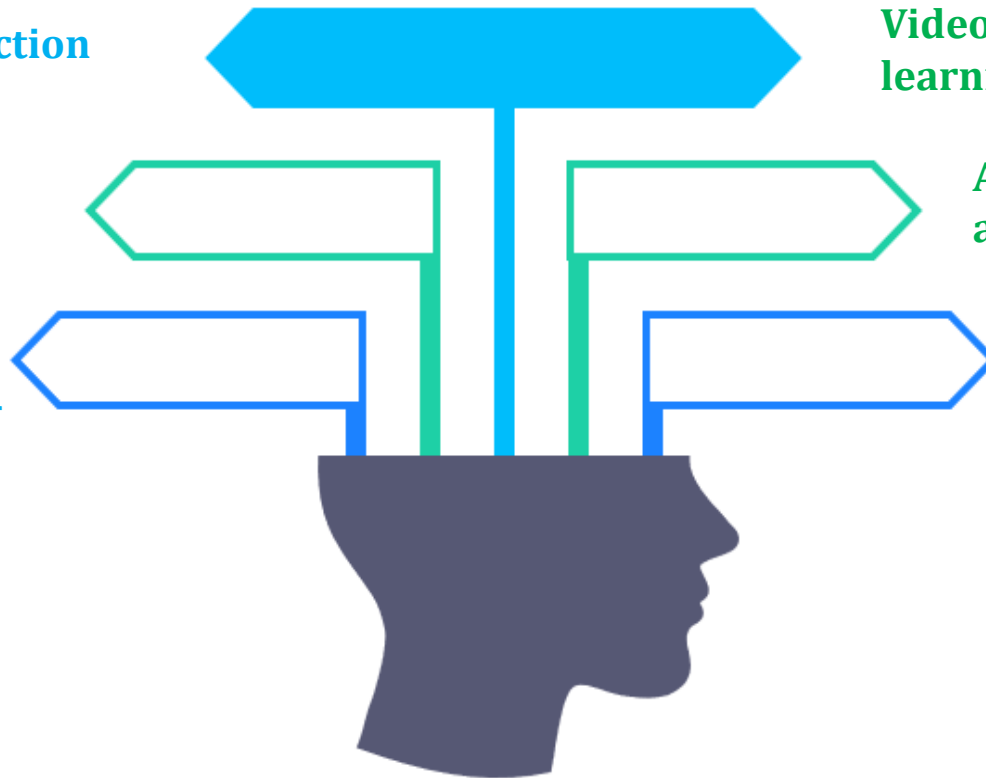
Lack of motivation and delay action

Video games and applications turned into learning tools

Lack of direct socialization

A different working environment, an advantage for introverts

Excessive individualization of learning leads to the denial of teacher-student dialogue, loss of practical and investigation skills

Introducing a cognitive and efficient style, an independent work style, stimulating logical thinking and imagination, stimulating the capacity for innovative learning, adaptable to conditions of rapid social change

Sources

- Ministry of Education and Research - www.edu.ro
- Dâmbovița County School Inspectorate - www.isj-db.ro
- Legislative portal of the Ministry of Justice– http://legislatie.just.ro/
- Bucharest Resources and Educational Assistance Department - Survey: Pupils, parents and teachers perception on daily activities during self-isolation - http://www.cmbrae.ro/2017/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Raport_studiu_ISMB_CMBRAE_context_pandemie_2020-1.pdf