

## Coronavirus. Report on the lessons of the crises.

March 2020

### Argument

An academic institution in the field of social and political sciences cannot aim at an analysis of the concrete management of such crises, this aspect must be left entirely for the authorities. What an academic institution, such as our own, can do is to place the recent developments into a larger framework, to analyze the authority's responses to this crisis and to draw conclusion aimed at improving the management of next crises by advancing concrete proposals.

### Overview

Even if different crises have particular characteristics, they all have in common element of panic, which hinders the effectiveness of the authorities' response, while at the same time it creates an opportunity for gross manipulations and for the spreading of fake news. (An earthquake, for example, entails joint actions and activities and is different from a pandemic/epidemic, as the latter requires isolating people to stop the spread of the disease).

Then, crises can have their source on the national territory, such as, for example, an earthquake in Vrancea, which allows authorities to undertake multiple actions, both in relation to its cause and to its effects, or on the territory of other states, which limits the authorities to deal only with the consequences.

### Evaluation parameters

1. **The instruction and training of the population** for such events and situations. This should be a continuous activity that must aim to reach all citizens, schoolchildren included, and it must be maintained and verified through constant exercises;
2. **The identification of vulnerabilities** (for example, the existence of a large Romanian population in Italy was a major vulnerability - as Italy was hit so hard by the pandemic of Covid-19 - and this issue should be introduced in the national security strategy, which must also be periodically updated);
3. **The existence of necessary legislation** (the implementation of amendments and updates should be avoided while the crisis is ongoing);
4. **The safeguard of necessary stocks of goods and equipment** for the types of crisis identified in the vulnerability assessment and in the national security strategy;
5. **Prior development of communication strategies** depending on the nature of the crisis, following the principle of a single authorized source (such as, for example, the Ministry of National Defense on September 11, 2011);
6. **The political cooperation** is essential for the success of measures undertaken by authorities in response to the crisis. This is true both in the relationship between power and opposition, but also within the government, given the internal competition that often exists between members of the same cabinet; for example, the communication services within the

ministries seek to promote their own minister, treating the crisis and measures to combat it as an opportunity for political affirmation.

**Proposals**

The main proposal would be for Romania to create a Civil Protection Service, bringing together the existing services (ISU, SMURD, etc.) and perfecting it with other components, according to the existing model in the other NATO countries.