

## **“Youth Is Debating” - a prestigious national contest in schools**

### **Romania**

[Ministerul Educației și Cercetării](#)

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#### **DESCRIPTION**

**“Youth Is Debating”**, launched in the 2009-2010 school year, is now a **prestigious annual national competition focused on debates** in Romania.

Its aim is to promote the **development of communication, argumentation, and critical thinking skills of students** in pre-university education from different high school profiles (humanistic, scientific, and VET).

Starting in the 2016-2017 school year, the contest became a "National Olympics" competition, organised by the Ministry of Education and included in the official contests list that are promoted yearly.

The contest aimed at **cultivating a critical, logical, and rational attitudes** among a wider group of young people.

The competition also aims to **raise awareness of the values of active and democratic citizenship, by understanding different social realities, supporting inter-ethnic dialogue and non-discrimination, encouraging reasoned debate, and practicing a tolerant and open attitude towards social, ethnic, economic, health, gender differences**, which may constitute barriers to communication.

An objective of this Olympiad is to encourage students to **understand democratic values and practice basic democratic principles, allowing them to assume the role of active citizens**. The emphasis is placed on developing the ability to differentiate, in relation to a certain context, between "democratic practices" and "undemocratic practices", identifying examples of good practices from various fields.

Students' participation in the competition involves going through several stages of selection, from the school, county, and regional levels, up to the national stage.

Teams of three students compete in two categories: beginners and advanced. Schools may register up to two teams in each category. The **debates** cover a range of **topics related to social, political or cultural issues, in compliance with specific rules and formats**.

The **national final of the competition gathers around 390 participants every year**.

The National Olympiad "Youth Is Debating" offers students the opportunity to meet and interact with other young people passionate about debate, as well as to win prizes and gain recognition for their skills.

Participating in this competition represents for students a **valuable experience in developing communication and debate skills**, developing the capacity to document, argue and use evidence in the elaboration of argumentative discourse, critical and rational thinking, fair play, in both school and societal contexts. These skills are necessary for their academic and professional future.

The teachers involved transfer to the class the learning contexts facilitated by this competition.