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STRENGTHENING THE RESEARCH-INNOVATION AND BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Abstract *The research is aimed at highlighting the importance of close collaboration and strengthening joint efforts in the field of research and innovation between academia and business, in order to stimulate technological progress, increasing economic competitiveness and facilitating the transfer of knowledge and scientific results to the market. This cooperation allows for the adaptation of study plans to the needs of the labor market, preparing specialists to be resilient to short- and long-term challenges.*

The legislative part provides support in the activity of the entrepreneurship-research-innovation field oriented towards the National Development Strategy of European Moldova. However, some challenges persist in some places, which require increased attention and at the same time their remediation.

The consolidation and communication of state authorities with the entrepreneurial environment and the research and innovation environment allow the application of various instruments, including research projects financed from the state budget.

Keywords: *research-innovation environment, entrepreneurial environment, financing, state projects.*

One of the fundamental pillars in the activity and development of the business and academic environments is the regulatory-legislative framework and state institutions that are intended to support and protect the main actors in these environments.

Developing and promoting accessible and intelligent laws, decisions and regulations using

horizontal approaches and establishing interoperable standards in this sector will establish provisions for capitalizing on all results and opportunities directed towards the state economy.

The business environment that collaborates with the university offers potential young entrepreneurs /researchers, through research centers or according to the new structure of research institutions the totality of legal, economic, financial, scientific and technological conditions that are focused on the research and innovation sector and influence the activity of entrepreneurs.

Technological research and innovation is the way to restore, transform and expand markets and at the same time provide the opportunity to develop the business and academic environment. Business expansion and the globalization of markets have revealed the importance of human and productive resources. Productive collaboration between science, technology and finance contributes to the emergence of innovations. Interactions are organized through the combined effect of private and public institutions. The approach to the concept of proximity-based innovation – and especially the concept of innovative environment – has always demonstrated its relevance and development towards economic models.[8]

To achieve the proposed objectives, the author uses extensive methodological elements that allowed the dialectical method of scientific knowledge to be applied, general and specific research methods such as: systemic method, logical method, complex method, graphic method, comparative analysis to study the collaboration of the research-innovation and business environment, etc.

The connection and collaboration of entrepreneurs with research and innovation organizations is the priority of the Ministry of Education and Research for 2025 are aimed at strengthening this partnership which is currently becoming essential for innovation and economic development activities. This connection can be strengthened through joint research projects/programs, technology transfer. Communication and involvement of the parties will contribute to creating sustainability, and businesses will benefit from innovative solutions and human capital from the academic environment.

In the Republic of Moldova, business ideas that aim to align with European regulations find solutions to their problems in innovative educational offers that are developed by professional teams. In the context of supporting the academic environment and connecting with the business environment, the state can become a technological, innovative and research hub. With the help of the National Fund for Innovation and Technology Transfer of 35 mill. lei the projects in strategic areas will be promoted to attract additional investments and people who want to develop these areas. [6]

In particular, research and technological innovations in academia and the entrepreneurial environment are currently guided by the National Agency for Research and Development (NARD) and ODA(EDO) which offers various programs, projects, guidance and consultancy both necessary for entrepreneurs and researchers as well as including their importance in developing and strengthening relationships with external partners.

We will continue to focus on the program offers received with funding from the state budget and managed by NARD.

Analyzing the information in the table presented, we can emphasize the fact that generally the largest number of projects in which co-financing persists represents Priority IV with ten projects.

We also mention that from the information in the Scientific Reports submitted to NARD within Priority III, external co-financing offered by IDIS Viitorul persists in the amount of 760.0 thousand lei and to Priority IV: Societal Challenges the amount of 190.3 thousand lei offered by the Institute of Sciences in Education and the Institute of Research, Innovation and Technology Transfer

To increase the interest of the academic and entrepreneurial environment in increasing co-financing amounts within project offers it is necessary to intervene with proposals or concrete steps that would be attractive to both parties involved.

Table 1. Funding of research projects under the State Program in the period 2020-2023 (in total)

	Number of projects financed from the budget with co-financing	Finan cing, thousand lei	
		from the state budget	co-finacing
Priority I: Health	9 of 40	20930,4	1883,2
Priority II: Sustainable agriculture, food security and food safety	3 of 26	10882,7	5798,4
Priority III: Environment and climate change	4 of 25	11411,0	1214,7
Priority IV: Societal challenges[1]	10 of 34	10601,5	2956,8
Priority V: Economic competitiveness and innovative technologies[2]	29	-	-

Note: [1] out of 45 projects, 11 projects do not have access to the final scientific report
[2] final scientific reports are not accessible

Source: calculated and developed by the author based on https://ancd.gov.md/ro/content/program-de-stat-2020-2023

An example for the entrepreneurial environment is the exemption from paying taxes by involving young researchers in their activity, or the payment by the entity of the study contract of the potential worker-researcher, which would offer the entity the possibility of being exempted (recalculated) from payments to the state budget.

In continuation of the idea, a step in the movement of supporting research and innovation activities is visible through the National Smart Specialization Program of the Republic of Moldova for 2024-2027 "Smart Moldova" approved by Government Decision No. 588 of 28.08.2024, which will support the following actions:

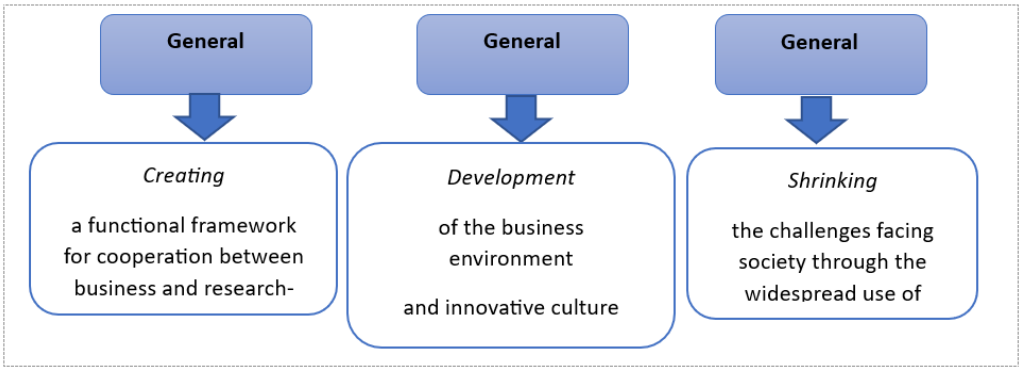


Figure 1. Priority objectives within the Smart Moldova Program
Source: developed by the author based on
https://gov.md/sites/default/files/document/attachments/nu-135-mec-2024.pdf

This program will be partially financed from the state budget (50 mill. lei), and 113 mill. lei will be accessed from external sources: from the European Commission, the World Bank and the German International Cooperation Agency. [4]

We tend to emphasize that the specific objective within Mission I is directed towards the development and implementation of programs necessary to support collaborative activities in the field of research and innovation highlighting the priority areas of smart specialization that have been identified.

Regarding Mission II, it was highlighted to increase the share of innovative enterprises including spin-off and start-up types, in areas of smart specialization, and within Mission III, one of the specific objectives is focused on increasing by 30% the participation of entrepreneurs from the Republic of Moldova in regional and European platforms and value chains. [1]

In accordance with p.10 of the National Program in the fields of research and innovation for the years 2024-2027, “the private sector of the research system, consisting of commercial companies and non-governmental organizations, is not included in: statistical reports, personnel statistics and expenditure statistics. It is only present in the statistics on the protection of intellectual property rights”.

I mention that General Objective II: Increasing the contribution of the research and innovation system to the development of society and the national economy of the program is targeted at: (a) developing and strengthening links between the research and business environments and (b) stimulating innovation and technology transfer. [2]

National Program for Promoting Entrepreneurship and Increasing Competitiveness in the Period 2023–2027 highlights the importance of continuing to strengthen political and economic relations with the European Union. It should be based on EU industrial policies and policies aimed at small and medium-sized enterprises respecting internationally recognized principles and practices in the field.

Developing an entrepreneurial and innovation framework highlighting specific objective 2.3: Facilitating technology and innovation transfer by implementing the Program to support digital innovations and technological start-ups from budgetary sources in the amount of 10000 thousand lei annually will propel the organization and approval of collaborative and practical projects between the scientific community and the business environment. [3]

The success of a research institution in the academic environment represents its value primarily for the academic environment and for the economic environment and at the same time the ability to react quickly to changing conditions to also direct us towards supporting the entrepreneurial system at the national level. The intensity of cooperation between the academic and entrepreneurial environments is determined by the capacity and quality of the functioning of these environments, by the intensity of their support and the conditions in which they operate, by their efficiency through attractiveness, promotion of results (products) or viable businesses. Currently, these are an attractive environment for the involvement of young people, both inside and outside of them.

To evaluate the activity, it is necessary to take into account all the components that allow obtaining certain results, but also the changes in the dynamics of the efficiency of their activity located in the university environment.

Subsequently, in a concise form, we will present the parameters that will allow us to select (develop/adapt) the necessary indicators:

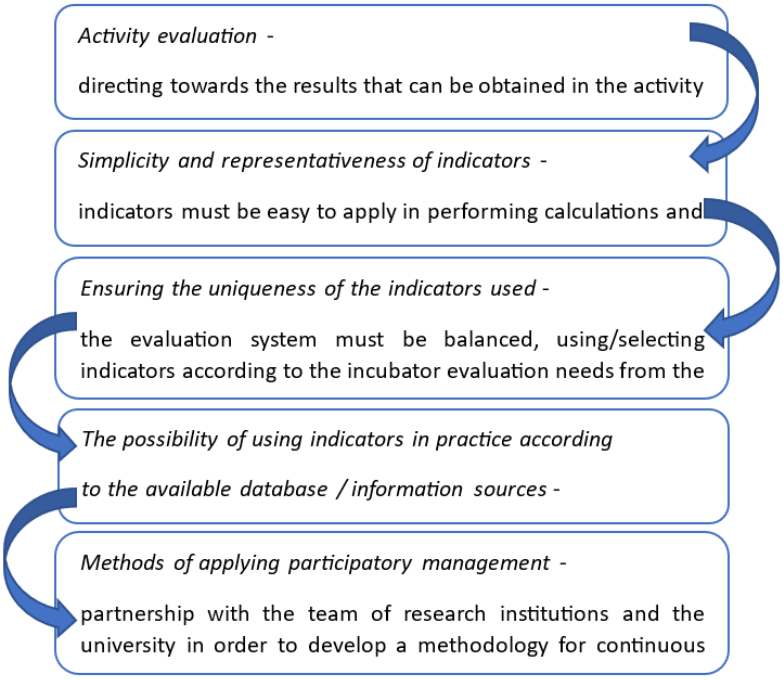


Figure 2. Criteria for selecting indicators aimed at evaluating Institutions / Centers
Source: completed by the author according to [5,7]

The need for a well-conceived, designed and institutionalized integrated entrepreneurship-research-innovation system, which would make it possible to involve all interested persons through motivation both in the development of the academic environment and the support of

entrepreneurs (students, master's students, doctoral students, young researchers, young entrepreneurs), such as training, consulting and business management, but also supporting them throughout the entire innovation process (and not only) - from generating the business idea, applying the research methodology obtaining the innovative product and marketing it on the market, including planning and developing the value chain.

Considering the above, the purpose of cooperation with the academic environment must be oriented not only towards the development of research with an innovative focus but also strengthening collaboration within innovative enterprises. At the time, the development of these connections will allow the development of the practical applicability of the skills acquired by the younger generation, including in entrepreneurial activity. Thus, university research institutions would maintain pBibliography: for research and innovative businesses. However, these can be included, depending on the needs and specifics of the situation, either as basic activities or as additional activities.

The state, through its institutions, supporting fundamental and applied research creates new reserves of scientific and technological ideas, which, not being used by economic entities may be necessary in the event of changes occurring inside or outside the market and, thus, serve to guide the activity of entrepreneurs, including those directed towards rural regions. Creating conditions and monitoring (evaluating) the activity of research institutions as a structural part of university institutions to interest and involve economic entities in fundamental and applied scientific research through the academic sector teachers, students, master's and doctoral students) playing an important role in guaranteeing sustainable competitiveness.

We believe that the adoption of legislative amendments and the achievement of the proposed objectives will strengthen the scientific, social and economic impact facilitating the stimulation, involvement and encouragement of human resources to strengthen partnerships between state institutions, academia and the private sector.

The paper is developed in the context of the realization “Strengthening socio-economic and legal mechanisms to ensure the well-being and security of the citizens” (CONSEJ 01.05.02).

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