

**STATE UNIVERSITY OF MOLDOVA**  
**DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES**

As a manuscript  
C.Z.U.: 339.96:332.14(478)

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**THE IMPACT OF EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE  
ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PUBLIC POLICIES  
IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA**

**563.02 - ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT IN PUBLIC  
ADMINISTRATION INSTITUTIONS; PUBLIC SERVICES**  
**Summary of the doctoral thesis in administrative sciences**

**CHIȘINĂU, 2023**

**The doctoral thesis was elaborated within the Doctoral School of Social and Educational Sciences, The State University of Moldova**

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The present doctoral thesis and the summary can be consulted at the Library of the State University of Moldova, at the Central Scientific Library (Institute) "Andrei Lupan", at the National Library of the Republic and on the ANACEC website (<http://www.cnaa.md>).

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## CONCEPTUAL LANDMARKS OF THE RESEARCH

**The actuality and importance of the investigated theme.** The Republic of Moldova, since its establishment as an independent state, has benefited from foreign assistance in a sustained manner, and its role in the elaboration and adoption of public policies in the field and in the achievement of the country's development priorities has been and remains to be a significant one. The European integration perspective came with new challenges for the entire society in the Republic of Moldova, especially for the public administration authorities, the absorption capacity of the assistance and the efficiency of the use of financial resources in the implementation of their public policies being of major importance for the process of social and economic development of the country. Currently, there are several opportunities to access European programs and funds for which the Republic of Moldova is eligible. However, even if information on existing programs is publicized, there is no exhaustive theoretical analysis of external assistance and its impact in the implementation of regional development public policies.

Within this context, the research topic aims to make a detailed description and a critical examination of the concept of external assistance, taking into account both the specificity of the legal-normative and the institutional framework, an approach that presents, on the one hand, the theoretical aspect focused on conceptual and methodological delimitations, and on the other hand, practical aspects centered on the assessment of the impact on the public policies of regional development, statistical and comparative analysis.

The study of the impact of external assistance on regional development public policies is of high actuality and important in the context of the reform efforts carried out in public administration in recent decades. The urgent need for reforms based on results, monitoring, and measuring the projected effects of public policies requires research into practices and techniques for assessing the impact of financial investments, including external assistance for development.

In this context, the analysis carried out in the present doctoral study will generate new knowledge, the implementation of which will motivate the actors involved for a better management of external assistance, with an impact on the process of implementation of public policies for regional development and administration in the Republic of Moldova.

Researching and identifying ways to improve the efficiency of the development assistance is an imperative for the Republic of Moldova. Therefore, the need to identify as urgently as possible the solutions for the problems regarding the development assistance in order to achieve the objectives of the public policies of regional development determines the importance and the actuality of the research topic. In this regard, the study provides the state authorities, donors, and

the public with recommendations for improving the process of implementation, monitoring and evaluation of external assistance.

The actuality and importance of the research also derives from the commitments stipulated in the Association Agreement between the Republic of Moldova and the European Union, signed in Brussels on 27 June 2014, which specifies (chap. 1, 22) that "cooperation focuses on the development of an efficient and responsible public administration in the Republic of Moldova", "efficient and professional management of resources" and the promotion of „ harmonious development of relations between the Republic of Moldova and its partners" [1, p.14]. At the same time, chapter 2, 25 on the Economic Dialogue refers to "the exchange of expertise in the macroeconomic and macro-financial sphere, including public finances ... external financial assistance and economic statistics" [1, p.15].

The importance of efficient use of external assistance resources and the materialization of the Sustainable Development Objectives can be found in national strategic documents, such as "Moldova 2030" [4], through the objective of ensuring an efficient and inclusive governance. The objective highlights the need to develop good governance, including by strengthening the regulatory framework and capacities of public administration of integrity, responsible and efficient in policy development, transparent and open in decision making according to the needs of the people and the management of public resources.

The need to streamline the external assistance and make it more efficient is also found in the Activity Program of the Government of the Republic of Moldova 2021-2025[8], where the emphasis is placed on the development of good governance, including by strengthening the regulatory framework and the capacities of the public administration in in the entire cycle of public policies, including capacities of ex-ante and ex-post evaluation of policies. At the same time, the program sets as a priority the development of capacities for the assimilation of funds for development, including strategic selection of priorities, evaluation, design, procurement, and quality assurance.

**Description of the situation in the field of research.** In order to determine the degree of research of the thesis topic, the investigation of a series of papers of researchers with fundamental contributions to the study of the impact of external assistance was initiated. The concept of external assistance, having the officially recognized name of Official Development Assistance (ODA), represents a specific dimension of international cooperation. The theoretical literature and also the empirical literature on the effectiveness of external assistance has evolved over the past two decades, providing a detailed perspective on the interaction between ODA and public administration institutions, as well as on how they influence a country's growth vector. In this

regard, classical growth theories have highlighted the role of physical capital accumulation (R. Ashley [24], P. N. Rosenstein-Rodan [48], J. D. Sachs [49]), while modern ones have provided a key role in explaining differences in economic performance between countries based on factors such as the transparency and efficiency of administrative institutions (R. Axelrod [25], M. Doyle [34], A. Moravcsik [45], S. Cohen [30]).

The empirical literature on the impact of external assistance is stately and provides various insights on the effects of ODA on public development policies. The most influential collaborative activity in the field of comparative studies is that of P. J. Schraeder, S. W. Hook and B. Taylor [50]. According to the authors, "the current debate on the foreign aid regime remains trapped in a kind of intellectual vacuum, given the lack of understanding by researchers of the determinant factors of external aid programmes" [50, p. 15]. Other researchers such as H. Hansen and F. Tarp [40], R. Durbarry, N. Gemmell and D. Greenaway [36], R. Lensink and H. White [41], M. Clemens, S. Radelet and R. Bhavnani [29], P. Collier and J. Dehn [31], C. Dalgaard [32], P. Guillaumont and L. Chauvet [39] have found that a country's structural vulnerability (to external shocks) has a significant impact on aid effectiveness: aid is more effective when the structural vulnerability is high.

Among scientific investigations, the work of C. Burnside and D. Dollar [27], which provides an ingenious treatment of the micro-macro paradox, is relevant. Since its publication, this work has obviously obtained the status of conventional philosophy in this field, boosting the interest of scientists in the field of research on the effectiveness of this aid.

The concept of impact of external assistance on public policies of regional development is insufficiently reflected by researchers from the Republic of Moldova. However, we reveal works of several authors who have tried to analyze the impact of foreign assistance on public policies in the Republic of Moldova: T. Șaptefrați [20], A. Popovici [16], T. Savca [19], O. Tăriță [21], V. Lozovanu [43]. In this respect, we also consider important the empirical works elaborated by the Expert Grup [12] and IDIS Viitorul [11] think-tanks with reference to the impact of ODA in the Republic of Moldova and the capacity to absorb the external assistance provided to our country, as well as the analyses of international organizations on ODA offered to the Republic of Moldova [51].

In the thesis context, the bibliographic study dedicated to the notion of "public policies" and "public policy of regional development" becomes imperative. Researchers who have devoted themselves to the field of public policy, B. G. Peters [47], W. Dunn [35], Ch. Lindblom [42], T. Dye [37] have devoted a long time to formulating a definition accepted by the vast majority of the scientific community. At the same time, several researchers from the Republic of Moldova and

Romania contributed to the research of public policies, such as F. Bondar [9], M. Profiroiu [17], M. Platon [15], O. Tărăță and M. Iațco [21], A. Popovici and C. Popovici [16], I. Munteanu [13].

The analysis of a wide spectrum of scientific publications in the field allows us to ascertain the insufficient nature of the research of the impact of external assistance on the public policies of regional development in the Republic of Moldova. The absence of a systematic analysis of this field in our country has led us to choose this research topic, considering that the achievement of the purpose and objectives of the doctoral thesis will contribute to the in-depth knowledge of the researched field, offering adequate solutions for the efficiency of external assistance.

**Research hypothesis** assumes that *the external assistance has an impact on the public policies of regional development, but it is being conditioned by the quality of the respective policies and by the commitment and capacities of the actors involved in the implementation of these policies.*

**The research problems** put forward as working hypotheses are:

- ✓ *Improving the quality of regional development public policies and the capacity of the public administration institutions responsible for implementing these policies can provide the key to achieving a qualitative leap in the development of regions.* The impact of external assistance is directly proportional to the capacity of the government act and the capacities of the central and local public authorities involved in the process of implementing public policies for regional development.
- ✓ *ODA will have a greater impact if regional development projects ensure the strengthening of public institutions and policies so that services are provided effectively.* Most external assistance is provided in the form of investment projects in certain sectors, such as roads, water supply or education. External assistance finances the entire public sector, and the overall quality of regional development policies and the empowerment of public administration institutions may be the key to ensuring the highest possible return on this funding. Therefore, the critical contribution of projects is not to increase funding for certain sectors, but to improve the provision of services by strengthening sectoral and local institutions.
- ✓ *An active civil society can lead to improved public services.* The participatory approach in the provision of services, as well as the continuous monitoring of the implementation of regional development projects can lead to significant improvements in this respect.

**The thesis aim and objectives.** The purpose of the present analysis lies in the theoretical and empirical research of the impact of external assistance on public regional development policies

from the perspective of identifying the methods of ODA efficiency in the context of reforming and improving the performance of the public administration in the Republic of Moldova.

In this context, in order to assess the impact of external assistance on regional public development policies, the objectives focused on:

- Synthesizing the historiographical and theoretical referential regarding the study of the impact of external assistance on the public policies of regional development.
- Elaboration of the methodological framework for studying the impact of external assistance on public policies of regional development.
- Analysis of the mechanism of coordination of foreign assistance and evolution of ODA dynamics in the Republic of Moldova.
- Identifying the correlation between EU assistance and strengthening public policies and institutions in the Republic of Moldova.
- Evaluation of the role/impact of external assistance in the implementation of regional development public policies in the Republic of Moldova.
- Identifying ways to streamline the official development assistance in the Republic of Moldova in the context of implementing regional development public policies and reforming/improving the performance of public administration.
- Drawing relevant conclusions and recommendations on increasing the impact of external assistance on regional development public policies in the Republic of Moldova.

**The methodology of the scientific research** cumulates the descriptive approach, the conceptual analysis, and the empirical studies, taking into account the inter and transdisciplinary elements necessary to approach such a complex topic. In order to present a complex approach to the concept analyzed in the thesis, the following principles were applied in the process of conducting the research: the scientific principle, the principle of historicism, the principle of interdisciplinary, the principle of complementarity and the principle of objectivity.

The thesis presents *a systemic approach* to the studied theme, researching the administrative mechanism with reference to regional development in the Republic of Moldova, as an integrated system, but also as a whole constituted by component parts that inter-relate to each other. The research methodology used in the study of the impact of external assistance on the public policies of regional development has as a starting point the research theme, the purpose, the objectives, and the hypotheses of the thesis. The technology of thematic research and evaluations, in this respect, is based on a flowchart consisting of five basic stages:

1. Establishing the conceptual basis for evaluation. This stage included defining the problem and choosing the research topic (studying the priority directions of research at national and international level, establishing the methodological purpose); reviewing the legislative/normative framework and analyzing the national and international bibliography; clarifying the problem by formulating hypotheses that need to be tested and confirmed or refuted; selection of research methods.

2. Review of administrative data: financial and physical. This method involved the establishment of variables, the analysis of the relationships between variables and aggregated information on ODA products and results.

3. Case study: To deepen certain aspects in detail, the case study in the North Development Region was developed. The methods used in the case study included detailed research and analysis of documents, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, surveys, project visits, etc.

4. Data analysis and interpretation. After the completion of the data collection, the analysis of the data, their centralization and verification, and the testing of the hypothesis was carried out. In conducting the research, both qualitative and quantitative methods were applied.

5. Conclusions and recommendations: Finally, based on all the analysis, conclusions on the impact of external assistance on public regional development policies were drawn.

The methods of research and data collection within the thesis were varied and involved bibliographic documentation (research of bibliographic material, study of legislative documents), quantitative methods (questionnaire and statistical analysis), and qualitative methods (observation, case study and interview). The comparative method facilitated the research of similarities and differences between paradigms and theories in the field of international relations. At the same time, a database of external assistance projects in the field of regional development for the period 2009-2021 was created for the elaboration of the doctoral thesis. Structural-functional, comprehensive, induction and inference, dialectics, analysis and synthesis methods have been used to research the theories, concepts, definitions, elements and functional structure of ODA. Similarly, through the mentioned methods, the theories and decision-making models that underlie the decisions to provide external assistance for the modernization and development of the regions have been identified. Finally, the methods of improving the quality of ODA in the Republic of Moldova are synthesized, depending on the deficiencies identified in the research.

**The scientific novelty of the obtained results.** The impact of external assistance on public policies and the achievement of the regional development objectives of the Republic of Moldova has been insufficiently addressed in the existing literature. Most sources on the subject are purely informative approaches, many of them only online, overviews, abstracts, articles, etc., making it

quite inaccessible to treat and understand this phenomenon. Thus, the absence of a systematic analysis of this field in the Republic of Moldova was decisive in choosing this research topic.

In this respect, the research is necessary by promoting an innovative and interdisciplinary vision both with reference to the phenomenon of the impact of external assistance on the development of public policies in order to achieve the regional development objectives of the Republic of Moldova, as well as the notions of "external assistance", "public policies" and "regional development", which are insufficiently addressed in the specialized literature in the Republic of Moldova. This work represents one of the first complex scientific researches, in the local scientific area, dedicated to the theoretical and practical analysis of ODA and the highlighting of the peculiarities and systems of ODA implementation in the Republic of Moldova. The author conducts a theoretical and empirical research on the impact of ODA on the public policy of regional development, in a case study analyzing the effects of external assistance in the North Development Region.

Moreover, for the first time during the research, the evaluation of the impact of external assistance by econometric methods was carried out by means of an analysis of the theoretical and methodological aspects of the impact and, also, the evaluation methodology developed by calculating an Indicator (synthetic) of Economic and Social Development (IDES) for each region on the basis of which the level of development/underdevelopment can be established, which could serve as a tool for monitoring the impact of public policies for regional development [20]. To make the external assistance more efficient in the Republic of Moldova, the author presented the ways to improve it, derived both from the specialized scientific literature and from the implementation practice.

**The important scientific problem solved.** The thesis scientifically substantiates the impact of external assistance on the public policies of regional development, which contributed to the identification of methods to increase the impact of ODA in the context of the desideratum of reforming and streamlining the public administration. Considering the fact that the scientific research in question focuses on strengthening and ensuring the continuity of the development process of the public policies of regional development through the efficient use of external financial resources, the study led to the formulation of conclusions and recommendations on the efficiency of ODA investments in the implementation of these public policies in the Republic of Moldova.

**Theoretical significance of the thesis.** The theoretical potential of the research is given by the totality of concepts, definitions, theories, models, structural elements, and rationality conditions regarding ODA, taken from the works of classical authors, up to those of modern

researchers, as analyzed and presented by the author. The theoretical importance of the work derives also from the synthesis of information based on normative and strategic documents regarding the external assistance coordination mechanism that completes the level of knowledge of the researched field of the study. Of particular importance for the theory of public administration is the ways of streamlining ODA in the Republic of Moldova in the context of developing complex public policies for regional development and reforming public administrations. The conclusions and recommendations proposed by the author for improving the efficiency of ODA in the Republic of Moldova are innovative.

**The applicative value of the thesis** results from the fact that, in addition to the theoretical research of the methods of increasing the impact of external assistance, the author has applied in practice the identified ways of streamlining ODA in the process of implementing the regional development policy through the prism of various managerial functions in the ten years of activity within the North Regional Development Agency (North RDA). Thus, we consider that the results of the research useful to be applied in the activity of the administrative public authorities of the Republic of Moldova. As a result, ODA will become more efficient, rational, transparent, participatory, results oriented. The research results can be integrated into the curricular subjects of the universities that train civil servants. Also, the research results need to be applied within the process of reforming and harmonizing with the European acquis the normative and strategic framework regarding ODA and regional development policies in the Republic of Moldova.

**The main scientific results submitted for sustainment:**

1. Theoretical and empirical analysis of the impact of external assistance on public policies of regional development from the perspective of identifying methods of improving ODA efficiency in the context of reforming the public administration.
2. Evaluating the impact of external assistance by calculating it for each region the IDEs on the basis of which the level of development/underdevelopment can be determined, which could serve as a tool to monitor the impact of ODA on public regional development policies.
3. Identifying the correlation between external assistance and regional development in the Republic of Moldova through the evolutionary analysis of public policies for regional development.
4. Conducting an impact study at the level of the North Development Region, to assess the capacity of the North Regional Development Council (RDC) in the implementation of the regional development policy and identifying the degree of participation of the RDC

members (LPA I, LPA II, NGO) in the elaboration and implementation of these public policies.

**Implementation of the scientific results.** The results of the research with reference to the theories, definitions, concepts, models, and stages of ODA, as well as the methods of monitoring, evaluating, and efficiency improvement of external assistance in the field of regional development policies are widely applied within the activity of the North Regional Development Agency. They are also implemented within the processes of initiation, preparation and development of draft normative acts and public policy documents in which RDA participates together with the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development. In this respect, we mention that the researcher was part of the working group for the elaboration of the National Strategy for Regional Development 2022-2028, also participating in the elaboration of the Operational Manual on how to use the means of the National Fund for Regional Development. At the same time, the researcher is one of the authors of the North Regional Development Strategy 2016-2020 and of the North Regional Development Program for the period 2022-2024. The findings of the thesis are included in the LPA (Local Public Authorities) capacity development programs in the North Development Region organized annually by North RDA.

**Approval of the research results.** The results of the research are reflected in 15 scientific articles prepared, elaborated, and presented by the author at national and international conferences (International Conference "Decentralization: the way to modernization of the Republic of Moldova", Chisinau, December 17-18, 2015; International Scientific-Practical Conference "Theory and Practice of Public Administration" May 20, 2016, May 22, 2020; International scientific-practical conference entitled: Contribution of young researchers to the development of public administration, third edition, February 24, 2017, March 1, 2019; International Scientific Conference dedicated to the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ASEM "25 years of economic reform in the Republic of Moldova: through innovation and competitiveness towards economic progress", September 23-24, 2016; National conference with international participation "Science in the North of the Republic of Moldova: achievements, problems, perspectives" (3<sup>rd</sup> edition), Academy of Sciences of Moldova, June 21-22, 2019; International Conference SCORUS (Standing Committee on Regional and Urban Statistics) 29.06-01.07.2016, Lisbon; International Scientific-Practical Conference "Статистика как наука и практика - традиции и современные измерения, Свищев", Bulgaria, 2018; National Conference with international participation "Science in the North of the Republic of Moldova: achievements, problems, perspectives" (6<sup>th</sup> edition) 20-21 May 2022, as well as in national scientific journals and publications ("Public Administration", no 4/2017; no 3/2019; no 2/2020, and Moldoscopy 2022). These were discussed, analyzed, and

approved within the respective scientific events, but also within the events organized by the current Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development of the Republic of Moldova and North RDA.

**Thesis structure:** introduction, three chapters, general conclusions and recommendations, bibliography (226 titles), 147 basic pages, figures - 26, tables - 14. The obtained results are published in 15 scientific papers.

**Keywords:** external assistance, impact, development, public administration, public institutions, evaluation of public policies, regional development.

## SUMMARY OF THE THESIS COMPARTMENTS

In *the introduction of the research*, the actuality and importance of the investigated theme are presented and scientifically argued, the purpose and objectives of the thesis are established, and by determining the methodological and theoretical-scientific support and the normative and legal basis, the scientific novelty of the obtained results, the solved scientific problem, the theoretical importance and the applicative value of the thesis, the approval of the results, as well as the summary of the thesis compartments are argued.

*Chapter 1* of the research, titled "*Historiographical and theoretical-methodological foundations on the impact of external assistance on regional development public policies*" includes three subchapters, which outline the historiographical and theoretical-methodological framework of official development assistance in the context of development policy.

Subchapter 1.1 titled "*Conceptual and historiographical aspects of the evolution of external assistance in the context of development policy*" presents classifications of theories in the field of international relations concerning development assistance, followed by their detailed description and the revealing of a conceptual framework for the analysis of ODA on regional development public policies. The author emphasizes the interdisciplinarity of development studies and follows the mutual influence of different approaches and concepts throughout the long history of the respective field.

From an evolutionary-historical perspective, it reveals the close connection between development theory and the three conflict paradigms - general theories in the field of international relations, which try to understand the motivations of donors and the principles of external assistance: *the classical paradigm, the liberal paradigm and the radical paradigm. The realistic approach (classical)* starts from the premise that, at the international level, there is an anarchic, disordered status, in which states, as central actors of international relations, act in a Machiavellian style according to their selfish interest determined by the fear of a threat to territorial integrity [24].

*The liberal perspective* presents foreign assistance as positive, considering that humanitarian concerns dominate the motivations of external assistance [25], [34]. *Radical theories* are presented as the result of theories about imperialism adapted to the post-colonial context. In *The Politics of the World Economy*, author I. Wallerstein [52] notes that unequal exchanges are the result of the hierarchy of states.

Particular attention is focused on post-development theory. Taking into account factors such as public administration institutions, political and social institutions, scientists have created a new paradigm of development, "sustainable development", which has become the most promising theory, capable of covering the full range of development challenges.

The conclusion of the analysis of the concepts and historiographical aspects of the theory of official development assistance indicates that this field is in a certain dependence on national, international and non-state interests. The genesis of the theory of development emphasizes the fundamental determinants, which generate variations in the economic growth of a beneficiary state, such as the influence of history, the numerous political and economic barriers to reform. The new development models focus on the role of factors such as the quality of governance as a result of the modernization of public administration, social cohesion, democracy, corruption, political barriers and the quality of institutions in general, and their interaction with other variables such as external aid in influencing the socio-economic development process of the regions.

Subchapter 1.2, titled "*Bibliographical landmarks investigating the impact of external assistance on public policies for development*", makes a review of the international bibliographical references investigating the ODA impact on public development policies and analyzes the theoretical reflections in the specialized literature of the Republic of Moldova.

The author points out the resultative works of the researchers R. Ashley [24], P. N. Rosenstein-Rodan [48], J. D. Sachs [49], R. Axelrod [25], M. Doyle [34], A. Moravcsik [45], S. Cohen [30], which served as a theoretical basis in explaining the impact of external assistance on development, but also the differences in the economic performance of the countries receiving ODA.

Within the research, the works of the authors P. J. Schraeder, S. W. Hook and B. Taylor [50], H. Hansen and F. Tarp [40], R. Durberry, N. Gemmell and D. Greenaway [36] R. Lensink and H. White [41], M. Clemens, S. Radelet and R. Bhavnani [29], P. Collier and J. Dehn [31], C. Dalgaard [32], P. Guillaumont and L. Chauvet [39], C. Burnside and D. Dollar [27] served as empirical support. Relevant work in the empirical literature suggests that foreign aid leads to an increase in total savings, but not of the same magnitude as the amount of aid.

In the autochthonous investigative area, the authors' contributions to the analyzed topic are relevant: T. Șaptefrați [20], A. Popovici [16], T. Savca [19], O. Tăriță [21], V. Lozovanu [43], who elucidate a series of aspects related to the contribution of external assistance to the consolidation of public administration in the Republic of Moldova. In order to identify the research problem, the empirical research developed by national and international organizations and institutions was analysed with reference to the impact of ODA in the Republic of Moldova and the absorption capacity of the external assistance granted to our country [12], [11], [51].

The author concludes that the specialized literature that approaches the concept of official development assistance in relation to public policies of development treats this phenomenon in a differentiated way, depending on the scientific and theoretical perspective through which this phenomenon is researched. At the same time, it is noted the deficient character of the bibliography on the impact of external assistance on public policies of regional development in the Republic of Moldova.

In subchapter 1.3, titled "*Methodological framework for studying the impact of external assistance on public policies of regional development*", the research methodology applied to the elaboration of the paper is reflected, by identifying the main methods and techniques for assessing the impact of ODA, with the author proposing his own methodology for calculating the impact of ODA on public policies of regional development [20]. Also, the definitions of the concepts of "impact", "efficiency" and "effectiveness" were investigated, examining various approaches regarding the evaluation of the impact of external assistance. The most relevant conceptual landmarks are distinguished in the Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management " [38, p. 24] and in the researches of the authors P. F. Drucker [10, pp. 30-85], P. Boone [26], D. Dollar [33], M. Profiroiu [17, pp. 89-91].

The current problems regarding the methodology of the evaluation of the impact of public policies in the Republic of Moldova were approached in the works signed by T. Șaptefrați [20]. We consider it necessary to also note the efforts of researchers T. Savca [19], I. Paladi [14] and I. Munteanu [13] in the field of public policy evaluation.

In the process of conducting the research, the following principles, approaches, and methods of scientific research were applied:

- *The scientific principle* allowed the research of administrative processes related to the mechanism of coordination of external assistance in the Republic of Moldova.
- *The principle of historicism* was the basis for the comprehensive analysis in terms of the genesis of external assistance and its role on development.

- *The principle of interdisciplinarity* involved crossing the traditional boundaries between the sciences and combining their techniques in an effort to achieve a common goal and allowed us to observe the diversity of spheres of interference of external assistance on the one hand and of regional development policy, on the other, being studied by researchers in the administrative, political science, sociological and economic fields.
- *The principle of complementarity* was relevant in the process of studying the impact of external assistance on regional development policy through the prism of definitions, legal and institutional framework in the Republic of Moldova.
- *The principle of objectivity* was the basis for the equidistant and impartial elucidation of the specific features of the official development assistance in the Republic of Moldova.

The research focused on a complex methodological analysis that involved bibliographic documentation, statistical analysis, questionnaire, observation, case study, structural-functional, comprehensive methods, induction and deduction, dialectic, analysis and synthesis. At the same time, the study adopted analysis methods and techniques, based on costs and benefits, researching the evaluation of the impact of external assistance on public regional development policies through econometric methods. This approach was achieved by using the Cobb-Douglas production function to research the dynamics of the value of the GDP, ODA indicators and the statistical estimation of the coefficients of a regression. Considering that the measurement of the impact of the implementation of regional development policies is reflected through a set of indicators (of different measurement units), the research proposes a method that allows the aggregate evaluation of the impact indicators. In this context, starting from the territorial discrepancies in development, a new assessment methodology is identified by calculating for each district (region) a (synthetic) Economic-Social Development Indicator (IDES), on the basis of which the level of development (underdevelopment) and which could serve as a tool for monitoring the impact of public policies [20]. The study presents the main steps in determining the aggregate indicator, namely: (1) the selection of the characteristics to be taken into account to determine the level of economic-social development of the administrative-territorial units; (2) transforming the features so that they become dimensionless and can be subsequently subjected to summation operations; (3) calculation of partial synthetic indicators for each domain; (4) calculation of the global synthetic indicator of economic and social development.

The author reveals the importance of using ODA impact assessment techniques in socio-economic analyses, in order to improve the implementation of public financial interventions through projects, programs, strategies and policies.

*Chapter 2 "Dynamics and dimensions of the impact of foreign assistance in the Republic of Moldova"* consists of three subchapters, with the aim of making an incursion into the national context of official development assistance.

In subchapter 2.1. titled *"Coordination mechanism of foreign assistance in the Republic of Moldova"* is presented the mechanism of coordination of foreign assistance in the Republic of Moldova, analyzing the main commitments of the country in the field of ODA efficiency improvement.

The research of the institutional framework identifies the main actors responsible for the management of external assistance. At the national level, the competences and attributions in this field of the Ministry of Finance, the sectoral Coordinator of external assistance, the sectoral Council in the field of external assistance and the Office of Management of External Assistance are analyzed. At regional and local level – Regional Development Agencies and local public administration authorities are presented as the main development actors.

The paper analyzes the mechanism of coordination and management of external assistance at national level, represents a cycle that includes several stages, namely: planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation. At the same time, it is revealed the belonging to international commitments in the field of making foreign assistance more efficient, such as the Paris Declaration (2005) [46], the Accra Agenda of Actions (2008) [22], the Bussan Commitments (2011) [28] and the Mexico Communiqué (2014).

Analyzing the existing institutional framework, it is concluded that, despite efforts to improve the coordination of external assistance, it is deficient system in aspects related to the excessive centralization of ODA management, fragmentation and poor coordination of donor interventions, an ineffective monitoring and evaluation system, reduced accountability and low predictability of foreign aid flows. In this context, in order to streamline the management of ODA, increasing the role and capacities of public administration is considered indispensable.

Subchapter 2.2. *"Evolution of external financial assistance to the Republic of Moldova"* presents, based on available statistics, an analysis of the dynamics and trends of external financial assistance in the Republic of Moldova for the period 2009-2021. Researching evolutionarily the statistical data and national and international reports, it is found that the Republic of Moldova is gradually recovering from a dramatic decrease in real GDP and living standards after the breakup of the USSR. The analysis of the dynamics of the Republic of Moldova in the rankings of the Human Development Index reflects the stages of evolution taken, the progresses and obstacles to human development and poverty reduction. Although the ranking of the Republic of Moldova is gradually improving, the country managing to increase its score by 0.1 from 0.653 in 1990 to 0.75

in 2020, the progress is quite slow [44]. Within the context, external development assistance remains crucial for the budget and economy of the Republic of Moldova.

According to the statistical data of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, the Republic of Moldova ranks in the top ten countries in Europe receiving foreign assistance (6th place), with an average for 2010-2021 of over 5.41% of the total assistance of the region, surpassing North Macedonia, Montenegro, and the Republic of Belarus. The author contrasts the evolution of ODA disbursed with the commitments of donors and notes the low absorption capacity of the public administration authorities of the allocated financial resources, at the national and local level.

It can be seen that, in the period 2009-2021, the most important cooperation partners of the Republic of Moldova in the line of implementing the development agenda were the EU, the WB and the USA, which are also the largest and most important donors in terms of the volume of disbursements. Consolidation of public administration skills is one of the basic objectives of the financial support offered to the Republic of Moldova. In this sense, important resource allocations to the development of the capacity of the public sector for good governance are revealed; for the development of public policies, the modernization of public services, as well as for ensuring gender equality, etc. It is concluded that, although the Republic of Moldova has benefited from considerable volumes of external assistance for development, the increase in the efficiency of the use of financial resources is not as obvious. Public administration authorities still face serious problems in the effective use of external support. Aid remains highly dependent on political stability and reforms, and is in many cases misused or ineffective.

In conclusion, in the context of benefiting from ODA, harmonization and skills development are needed to deepen coordination, effectiveness and increase the impact of external assistance. In the context of donor-recipient country relations, harmonization means the establishment and use of common arrangements based on a program, and capacity building means better management of external funds.

Subchapter 2.3 *"The role of EU assistance in strengthening public policies and institutions in the Republic of Moldova"* investigates the correlation between the country's main donor and development partner, the EU, and the development of public administration capabilities to assess whether and to what extent development assistance contributes to the development of the country/region in the context of reforming public administration.

In this respect, it is revealed that the European Union remains an absolute leader in terms of non-reimbursable financial assistance, offering - from the beginning of the cooperation with Moldova - over 1.7 billion euros in the form of a grant. The basic instrument used by the European

Union in providing external assistance to the Republic of Moldova is represented by the sectoral budget support, which constitutes about 70% of the annual financial envelopes. In addition to the budgetary support provided by the EU, ODA is complemented by technical assistance, which is currently a valuable tool for providing advice in the field of elaboration and implementation of public policies, as well as reformation of the public administration system. According to statistical data provided by the OECD, of the total EU external assistance provided in the period 2009-2020, around 12% constitutes technical assistance. In this respect, a substantial contribution of the external assistance provided by the EU is the support in the field of strengthening the institutional capacities of the public administration and good governance. To achieve this objective, the EU continues to support reforms with a view to consolidating transparent, accountable, and efficient public administration. Technical cooperation includes consulting services from specialists, development of authorities' skills, financing of consulting services, providing equipment and materials for endowment of assisted institutions, as well as the development of studies and expertise. This was achieved through Twinning and TAIEX programs, through the policy assistance of the EU High Level Consultants, which resulted in the assumption of the reform of the governance system in the Republic of Moldova at all levels, to increase accessibility, transparency and improve the range and quality services offered to citizens.

Regarding the impact generated by EU support on public policies in the Republic of Moldova, it is concluded that ODA financing was essential both for the "launch" and "trigger" reform initiatives, as well as for the implementation and support of the reform activity in the long term long. EU funds have also been widely used for the training of civil servants. Although the number of beneficiaries of technical assistance is impressive, it is not clear the extent to which those courses have contributed to the creation of an efficient public administration, capable of providing quality public services. At the same time, it is revealed that public policies and the modernization of public administration, emerging from the issue of the impact of European assistance on them, do not have a systemic and coherent approach.

*Chapter 3 "Practical aspects of assessing the impact of external assistance on regional public development policies in the Republic of Moldova"* includes three subchapters and focuses on assessing the impact of external assistance on regional public development policies in the Republic of Moldova.

Subchapter 3.1 *"Characteristics of regional development public policy in terms of the impact of external assistance"* proposes an analysis of the role of external assistance in the implementation of regional development public policies. In this respect, the macroeconomic indicators of the Republic of Moldova are investigated, which demonstrates major differences in

regional GDP per capita between development regions. The study indicates that Chisinau municipality generates the highest GDP compared to other regions, contributing with about 60% to the national value of GDP. This fact confirms that the economic activity is concentrated, for the most part, in the capital of the country and that the biggest disparity remains to be between Chisinau and the other regions.

It analyzes the main legislative and strategic documents on regional development, an investment policy, which aims to support competitiveness and economic growth, improving the quality of life, creating jobs and sustainable development. In this respect, the important role of external assistance and development partners in the development and implementation of public policies for regional development is noted. The author reveals that public regional development policies at the national level are aligned with the provisions of the Association Agreement, Title IV, Chapter 20 "Regional development, cross-border and regional cooperation" [1], by which the Republic of Moldova and the European Union agreed to promote mutual understanding and bilateral cooperation in the field of regional policies.

In order to support the Government in ensuring the balanced and sustainable socio-economic development of the territory of the Republic of Moldova, a number of donors have consolidated their effort to achieve the objectives of regional development. The correlation between the evolution of regional development policies in the Republic of Moldova and the external assistance provided by the community of donors is identified. It is presented that, overall, in the period 2010-2021, the development partners provided external financial assistance in the field of regional development worth over 500 million euros, the financial resources being channeled, particularly, towards the modernization of local public services and good governance.

Referring to the contribution of development partners, it is noted that the impetus for regional development in the Republic of Moldova also resulted from the political dialogue with the EU in the early 2000s. The first regional development projects, financed by the EU in the 2000s, are represented by the TACIS project and assistance technique funded by DFID (UK) and Sida (Sweden). Later, starting in the 2010s, the main long-term development partner becomes GIZ, namely the "Modernization of Local Public Services" project, which thus becomes the main support in the coordination of assistance for regional development in the Republic of Moldova.

The result of the research highlights the need to increase the amount of external financial resources allocated for regional development to cover the needs of the regions, taking into account the existence of a fairly large gap between the commitments and the amounts disbursed by donors. At the same time, the effective collaboration of the institutions responsible for the targeted field

with the development partners is the main link for regional development, decentralization and the development of the capacities of local public administrations.

Subchapter 3.2. *"Analysis of the impact of external assistance on public policies of regional development"* investigates the effects produced by external assistance in the implementation of public policies of regional development in the Republic of Moldova. Thus, it is found that the approach to regional development issues is in a process of transformation, during the period of implementation of the Law on Regional Development, being developed and approved 3 National Strategies for Regional Development (NSRD), which include the periods 2010-2012, 2013-2015 and 2016-2020. Investigating the performance indicators and the results of the implementation of the 3 NSRDs, it is mentioned that, during the implementation of the regional development policy, all the regions of the Republic of Moldova recorded modest development performances, facing major economic and social challenges, maintaining the trend of increasing regional differences and gaps. However, there have been improvements against the negative trends that have dominated the development of the regions (with the exception of capital city Chisinau) in the last decades [7], which were obtained by channeling financial resources from National Fund for Regional and Local Development and due to external assistance in the field of regional development.

Using the IDES method, the impact of ODA on development policies was investigated with the aim of eliminating disparities in the socio-economic development of regions. Thus, it can be found that until 2015, the regional development policies promoted by the Government did not significantly influence the elimination of disparities in the socio-economic development of the regions. After 2015, in particular, with the adoption of the NSRD 2016-2020 and as a result of the implementation of infrastructure projects, the regions have improved their economic and financial indicators, the positive impact being visible in the development of districts.

In order to assess the impact of external assistance in the field of regional development in the Republic of Moldova, qualitative research was used, carried out with the help of a questionnaire including 13 questions, developed by the author, to which 42 experts replied in the period January - June 2021. The analysis shows that the external assistance for development had an average impact on the public policies of regional development in the Republic of Moldova.

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis was carried out based on the information extracted from the respondents' responses to the questionnaires administered, which allowed the identification of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and risks for the future regarding the impact of external assistance on regional development public policies. The SWOT analysis highlights the important role in achieving a complex program of institutional

capacity building of regional and local structures in attracting external assistance resources and strengthening cooperation with development partners.

It is concluded that, so far, regional development policy has focused more on implementing initiatives, programs and projects that contribute to reducing disparities. Thus, more consistent interventions are needed to stimulate the economic growth and competitiveness of the regions in order to achieve the general objective of the uniform regional development policy of the Republic of Moldova.

Subchapter 3.3 "*Capacity building of regional actors – catalyst in the development of the North Development Region*" examines the role of the North Regional Development Council in the development of the region. The subchapter reflects the empirical value of the work and is based on the case study on the impact of ODA on the development of the North Development Region (NDR) of the Republic of Moldova.

The case study carried out is an evaluation based on the collected data analyses, using qualitative and quantitative methods with the collection of primary data (completed questionnaires and interviews). At the same time, the phase of the documentary research involved the evaluation of the regional development policy documents elaborated and applied at national and regional level, as well as the thorough estimation of the documents elaborated by the local public authorities. In the process of collecting empirical data, qualitative and quantitative techniques were combined. Regarding the qualitative dimension of the study, it is noted that the impact of external assistance on public policies in the field of regional development and decentralization in the NDR was estimated through the conduct of 3 interviews (North RDA collaborators, North RDC members, LPA specialists), complemented by in-depth individual interviews with NGO representatives. [17].

Regarding the quantitative dimension of the study, it is mentioned that the activity in the field of regional development was measured by applying the sociological survey. In this sense, it was administered a questionnaire consisting of 18 questions, applied between September and November 2021, on a representative sample of 100 people from LPAs II and LPAs I from the NDR of the Republic of Moldova, NGOs - all members or representatives of the institutions that are part of North RDC.

The analysis of the answers provided by the respondents confirms the hypothesis according to which the external assistance has an impact on the regional development public policies, the impact being conditioned by the capacity of the public administration authorities responsible for the implementation of these policies. [17].

The data obtained through the semi-structured interview with the LPAs members allowed us to adequately measure the LPAs ability to plan the social and economic development of the community, to attract and manage the appropriate means. One finding of the research is that the potential of LPAs from North Region in attracting investment is not fully utilized due to an insufficient understanding of the role of North RDC in the development of the North Region, the limited experience and contribution of North RDC members and a practice lacking expertise in solving common problems and challenges at regional and local level.

## **GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The research carried out within the doctoral thesis, which aimed at the theoretical and empirical substantiation of the impact of external assistance on the public policies of regional development and the determination of the ways of increasing its efficiency from the perspective of reforming and improving the management of the public administration, allowed the formulation of the following generalizations and conclusions:

1. The analysis of historiographical and theoretical research on the impact of external assistance on development allows us to find that the interest in studying the field is of actuality and extensively studied in the international scientific literature. The national bibliographical referential studied denotes the insufficiency of a conceptual basis and the deficient character of the scientific apparatus regarding the impact of ODA on the public policies of regional development.
2. The specialized literature research has confirmed that direct support for development and the decentralization of financial aid to the community, local and regional levels tend to generate higher levels of socio-economic development and increase the impact of regional development public policies. But this approach must be combined with new tools to consolidate public authorities and monitoring activities of the civic organizations.
3. The research methodology used in an integrated way theoretical and empirical methods for understanding the concepts, theories and processes that determine the impact of external assistance on regional development public policies. At the same time, based on the principle of interdisciplinarity, the research has adopted methods and techniques of analysis based on costs and benefits, assessing the impact of external assistance on public policies of regional development through econometric methods.
4. The study of the external assistance coordination and management mechanism at the national, regional and local level highlighted gaps related to the excessive centralization of

external assistance, the inefficiency of monitoring and evaluation systems, as well as the lack of predictability of assistance flows and the low responsibility of beneficiaries.

5. The analysis of the impact of external assistance showed little efficiency in relation to development policies. Even though the Republic of Moldova has benefited from considerable volumes of external development assistance, the increase in the efficiency of the use of financial resources is not as obvious. The increased focus on the effectiveness of external aid requires impact assessments to be carried out on regional development public policies. However, well-designed public policies aimed at improving the well-being of the population can become irrelevant if they are implemented ineffectively.
6. Supporting the quality of public policies and modernizing public administration in the Republic of Moldova were important elements of external assistance, benefiting from increased attention from the EU, but also from other donors. However, although the results are sometimes stately in terms of the number of participants, it is uncertain to what extent the courses have translated into a stronger and more efficient public administration capable of implementing quality public policies. Another finding of the research is that the support given to the public administrations of the Republic of Moldova was predominantly absorbed at the national level, only a small part being intended for the regional and local level.
7. Empirical research of the impact of external assistance on public policies of regional development has highlighted that external development assistance has an impact on public regional development policies in the Republic of Moldova, but the impact is conditioned by the quality of public policies and the act of governance. A difficulty regarding the results of capacity building activities to improve the efficiency of public policies is related to the environment, processes, and organizational culture of public administration institutions. In this respect, aid projects should be seen as capacity-building mechanisms involving public authority in the development process and producing socio-economic results in accordance with the economic strategy and the social welfare needs of the population of the region concerned.
8. The results of the research highlighted the fact that, although the regional development public policy benefited from a constant support from the development partners, however, the regions of the Republic of Moldova recorded modest development performances, facing major economic and social challenges. By applying econometric methods, it was found that the regional development public policy led to the reduction of the differences between the North, Center, South and UTAG regions, but the difference in the level of

development of all regions compared to Chisinau continued to grow. At the same time, it was found that the external assistance had a small impact on economic growth, although it is highlighted that the impact was directly proportional to the quality of the regional development public policies and the act of governance/public administration capacity.

The conclusions formulated as a result of the present research have contributed to solving the scientific problem that consisted in substantiating from the scientific and methodological point of view the impact of external aid on the public policies of regional development, consolidating and ensuring the continuity of the development process of the regional development public policies through the efficient use of external financial resources. Solving the research problem proposed in the doctoral thesis allowed the formulation of the following recommendations in order to streamline the external assistance in the implementation of public policies of regional development:

*For the Government (national)*

- The involvement of citizens is a defining dimension in streamlining ODA results. International experience shows that the involvement of citizens in monitoring the entire cycle of regional development public policies (elaboration, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation) leads to their efficiency and relevance and increases the sense of ownership and responsibility of the parties involved.
- The challenges of the regional development process require strong institutional coordination and an inter-ministerial approach in order to create an effective mechanism for coordinating external assistance, based on integrated strategic planning and optimization of programmed resources.
- The Republic of Moldova requires an efficient public administration in order to achieve the objectives of the National Regional Development Strategy and the AA commitments. Although the Republic of Moldova has modernized some legislative aspects and its administrative processes within the Central Public Administration Reform, additional efforts are needed to achieve the expected objectives.
- Approval and application of methodologies for ex-ante impact assessment and ex-post evaluation of regional development public policies.
- Developing the capacities of civil servants working in all government structures to develop and implement public policies for regional development.
- Establish a system to monitor citizens' satisfaction with public services.

- Setting targets in regional development policy documents and initiating public reporting on the implementation of regional development policies and programs.
- Develop a national rating of the implemented projects (a website designed for users to vote or assess the impact of the projects).

*For RDC/RDA (regional)*

- Reorganization of the RDC structure currently showing significant malfunctions caused, in particular, by structural oversizing.
- Increasing the responsibilities of the RDC in the coordination and planning process in terms of attracting investments in the field of regional development, as the main decision-making actor at regional level.
- Strengthening and empowering RDAs to establish themselves at regional level as development support institutions. Harnessing the potential of RDAs through their direct involvement in attracting external assistance for regional development projects. Ensuring the transparency of the international expertise/audit of the implemented projects.
- Adjusting the role of RDAs on the dimension of monitoring and evaluating the implementation process of development projects, including those financed from external assistance.

*For LPA (local)*

- Continuous capacity building of LPAs in the implementation of regional development policy and projects.
- Transfer of tasks for the implementation of regional development projects, including those financed from external assistance, from regional to local level.
- Involvement of LPAs levels II and I in concluding collaboration agreements with other interested public institutions and private organizations, both at the national and international level.

*For donors*

- Accountability of development actors to meet their shared commitments, improve the way they work together and increase the effectiveness of development assistance. Synergizing of donor interventions in the country.
- Selection of projects with tangible results for citizens that provide high visibility for donor states.
- Programming assistance within the framework of clear national sectoral strategies, supported by government programs and action plans.

- Effective monitoring on the side of donors of the ODA implementation.

The research offers new scientific dimensions in the development and investigation of the topic of impact of foreign assistance on regional development public policies. In this context, additional studies are needed regarding the good practices of countries with a high degree of absorption of external assistance, as well as the identification of innovative monitoring tools to increase the impact of regional development policies. Through the elaboration of this doctoral thesis, perspectives are created for the development of research in the field, monitoring and evaluation of the impact, thus becoming key components of a successful cycle of regional development public policies.

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## ADNOTARE

**Prisacari Maria „Impactul asistenței externe asupra politicilor publice de dezvoltare regională în Republica Moldova”. Teză de doctor în științe administrative. Chișinău, 2023.**

**Structura tezei:** introducere, trei capitole, concluzii generale și recomandări, bibliografie din 226 de titluri, 147 pagini de bază, figuri - 26, tabele - 14. Rezultatele obținute sunt publicate în 15 lucrări științifice.

**Cuvinte cheie:** asistența externă, impact, dezvoltare, administrare publică, instituții publice, evaluarea politicilor publice, dezvoltare regională.

**Domeniul de studiu:** administrația publică; organizarea și dirijarea în instituțiile administrației publice; servicii publice.

**Scopul lucrării** constă în cercetarea teoretică și empirică a impactului asistenței externe asupra politicilor publice de dezvoltare regională din perspectiva identificării metodelor de eficientizare AOD în contextul de reformare și îmbunătățire a performanței administrației publice din Republica Moldova.

**Obiectivele studiului:** sintetizarea referențialului istoriografic și teoretic privind studierea impactului asistenței externe asupra politicilor publice de dezvoltare regională; elaborarea cadrului metodologic de studiere; analiza mecanismului de coordonare a asistenței externe și a evoluției dinamicii AOD în RM; identificarea corelației dintre asistența UE și consolidarea politicilor și instituțiilor publice din RM; evaluarea rolului asistenței externe în implementarea politicilor publice de dezvoltare regională; identificarea modalităților de eficientizare a asistenței oficiale de dezvoltare în contextul implementării politicilor publice de dezvoltare regională și reformării/îmbunătățire a performanței administrației publice; formularea concluziilor și recomandărilor relevante cu privire la sporirea impactului asistenței externe asupra politicilor publice de dezvoltare regională în RM.

**Noutatea și originalitatea științifică.** Lucrarea reprezintă una din primele cercetări științifice complexe, consacrate analizei teoretico-empirice a impactului AOD asupra politicilor publice de dezvoltare regională și scoaterii în relief a particularităților și a sistemelor de implementare AOD în RM. În scopul eficientizării asistenței externe în RM, autorul a prezentat modalitățile de îmbunătățire a acestora, derivate atât din literatura științifică de specialitate, cât și din practica de implementare.

**Problema științifică soluționată** rezidă în: fundamentarea științifică a impactului asistenței externe asupra politicilor publice de dezvoltare regională, ceea ce a contribuit la identificarea metodelor de sporire a impactului AOD și formularea concluziilor și recomandărilor privind eficientizarea AOD în implementarea politicilor publice de dezvoltare regională în Republica Moldova.

**Semnificația teoretică a cercetării** este redată de totalitatea conceptelor, definițiilor, teoriilor, modelelor, elementelor structurale și condițiilor de raționalitate cu privire la impactul AOD în raport cu politicile publice de dezvoltare regională, preluate din operele autorilor clasici, până la cele ale cercetătorilor moderni, analizate și prezentate de autor. Importanța teoretică a lucrării rezultă și din sinteza informațiilor în baza actelor normative și strategice privind mecanismul de coordonare a asistenței externe ce completează stadiul de cunoaștere a domeniului cercetat, precum și soluțiile oferite de autor privind modalitățile de eficientizare a AOD în RM în contextul reformării administrației publice.

**Valoarea aplicativă a lucrării:** concluziile și recomandările propuse de autor pentru eficientizarea AOD din RM în contextul politicilor publice de dezvoltare regională pot servi drept temelie pentru autoritățile competente ale statului și necesită a fi încadrate și aplicate în activitatea instituțională și funcțională a autorităților publice administrative din RM.

**Implementarea rezultatelor științifice** a fost realizată prin: publicațiile științifice la subiectul cercetat; implementarea metodelor de și eficientizare a asistenței externe în domeniul politicilor de dezvoltare regională în cadrul activității ADR Nord.

## АДНОТАЦИЯ

**Присакарь Мария «Влияние внешней помощи на государственную политику регионального развития в Республике Молдова». Докторская диссертация в области административных наук. Кишинев, 2023.**

**Структура диссертации:** введение, три главы, выводы и рекомендации, библиография из 226 наименований, основных страниц - 147, фигур - 26, таблиц - 14. Результаты исследования опубликованы в 15 научных работах.

**Ключевые слова:** внешняя помощь, влияние, государственное управление, госучреждения, оценка реализации государственной политики, региональное развитие.

**Область исследования:** публичное управление; организация и руководство в учреждениях публичного управления; публичные услуги.

**Задача исследования:** Целью данного исследования является теоретическое и эмпирическое исследование влияния внешней помощи (ОПР) на государственную политику регионального развития с точки зрения определения методов повышения эффективности ОПР в целях реформирования и улучшения качества государственного управления в РМ.

**Цели:** обобщение историографических и теоретических материалов по изучению влияния внешней помощи на политику регионального развития; разработка методологических основ изучения влияния внешней помощи на политику регионального развития; анализ механизма регулирования внешней помощи и динамики ОПР в РМ; выявление взаимосвязи между помощью ЕС и процессом консолидации госучреждений в РМ; оценка влияния внешней помощи на реализацию политики регионального развития в РМ; определение путей повышения эффективности официальной помощи в РМ в контексте реформирования государственного управления; разработка рекомендаций по воздействию внешней помощи на улучшение политики регионального развития.

**Новизна и научная оригинальность работы.** Работа представляет собой одно из первых комплексных научных исследований, посвящённых теоретико-эмпирическому анализу влияния ОПР на государственную политику регионального развития и освещающих особенности системы реализации ОПР в РМ. В целях улучшения эффективности внешней помощи в РМ, автор представил пути ее улучшения на основе научной специализированной литературе, а также на практике ее использования.

**Решаемая научная задача** заключается в научном обосновании влияния внешней помощи на государственную политику регионального развития, что способствовало выявлению методов повышения влияния ОПР и разработке выводов и рекомендаций по эффективности ОПР в реализации государственной политики регионального развития РМ.

**Теоретическое значение исследования** представлена совокупностью концепций, определений, теорий, моделей и условий рациональности влияния ОПР на государственную политику, основанных на работах классических авторов и современных исследователей. Теоретическая значимость работы основана на нормативных и стратегических актах о механизме координации внешней помощи, а также предлагаемых автором решений относительно способов улучшения эффективности ОПР в РМ в контексте реформирования государственного управления.

**Практическая значимость работы:** выводы и рекомендации, предложенные автором для эффективности ОПР в контексте государственной политики регионального развития, могут служить основой для компетентных органов государства и должны быть применены в институциональной деятельности административных органов государственной власти РМ.

**Внедрение научных результатов** было достигнуто за счет научных публикаций по исследуемой тематике; внедрение методов улучшения эффективности внешней помощи в области политики регионального развития в рамках деятельности АРР Север.

## ANNOTATION

**Prisacari Maria "The impact of external assistance on regional development public policies in the Republic of Moldova". PhD thesis in administrative sciences. Chisinau, 2023.**

**Structure of the thesis:** introduction, three chapters, general conclusions and recommendations, bibliography consisting 226 titles, 147 basic pages, 26 figures, 14 tables. The obtained results are published in 15 scientific papers.

**Keywords:** external assistance, impact, development, public administration, public institutions, evaluation of public policies, regional development

**Field of study:** public administration, organization and management in public administration institutions, public services.

**Purpose of the paper:** consists in the theoretical and empirical research of the impact of external assistance on the regional development from the perspective of identifying methods of ODA efficiency in the context of reforming and improving the performance of the public administration in the Republic of Moldova.

**Research objectives:** synthesis of the historiographical and theoretical references regarding the study of the impact of external assistance on regional development policies; developing the methodological study; analysis of the external assistance coordination mechanism and the evolution of ODA dynamics in RM; identifying the correlation between EU assistance and the strengthening of policies and public institutions in RM; evaluation of external assistance role in the implementation of regional development policies in RM; identifying ways to make ODA more efficient in the context of implementing regional development policies and improving public administration performance; formulating relevant conclusions and recommendations on increasing the impact of external assistance on regional development policies in RM.

**The novelty and scientific originality of the paper.** The work represents one of the first complex scientific researches, dedicated to the theoretical-empirical analysis of the impact of ODA on regional development policies, highlighting the particularities and ODA implementation systems in RM. To streamline external assistance in RM, the author presented ways to improve it, derived from both the scientific literature and implementation practice.

**The scientific problem solved resides in:** scientific and methodological basis of the impact of external aid on regional development policies which contributed to the identification of methods to increase the impact of ODA and led to the formulation of conclusions and recommendations regarding the efficiency of ODA investments in the implementation of public development policies regional development in the RM.

**The theoretical significance of the research consists in:** concepts, definitions, theories, models, structural elements and conditions of rationality regarding ODA versus regional development public policies taken from the works of classical authors and modern researchers, analyzed and presented by the author. The theoretical importance of the paper also results from the synthesis of information based on the normative and strategic acts regarding the external assistance coordination mechanism that completes the state of knowledge of the researched field, as well as the solutions offered by the author regarding the ways to make ODA more efficient in the Republic of Moldova in the context of public administration reform.

**The applicative value of the paper:** the formulated conclusions and recommendations for the efficiency of ODA in the context of the regional development public policies, presented by the author, can serve as a basis for the competent state authorities and need to be applied in the institutional and functional activity of public administrative authorities in RM.

**The implementation of scientific results was achieved by:** scientific publications on the research subject; implementing the methods of monitoring and evaluating and improving external assistance in the field of regional development policies within the activity of the North RDA.

**PRISACARI MARIA**

**THE IMPACT OF EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE  
ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PUBLIC POLICIES  
IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA**

**563.02 - ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT IN PUBLIC  
ADMINISTRATION INSTITUTIONS; PUBLIC SERVICES**

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Offset paper. Digital printing.	30 copies
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