

# HIGHER EDUCATION REFORM IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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*"Education is the most powerful weapon  
which you can use to change the world. "*  
– Nelson Mandela

## Abstract

**Objective** - In the global context of transformation with a focus on sustainable development, universities in the Republic of Moldova face significant macroeconomic challenges. They are prompted to adopt and adapt to various organizational strategies, akin to those in the corporate sector, such as mergers. Although there are numerous international examples of university mergers, managing these mergers within a suitable framework remains a relatively uncharted territory. The purpose of this paper is to examine higher education reform in light of sustainable development and to identify the main challenges and potential benefits.

**Design/Methodology/Approach** - This work relies on the Government Decision related to the reform and on the statistical data of Moldovan universities. In approaching this synthesis, sustainable development principles have been integrated, alongside the new public management techniques and public value governance proposed by the Government of the Republic of Moldova.

**Findings** - Potential long-term benefits of the reform, especially in the context of sustainable development, are highlighted. A model for periodic assessment is proposed to ensure ongoing adaptability and relevance.

**Limitations/Implications of the Research** - Given that the reform is recent, there is a limitation regarding long-term available data. However, negative perceptions portrayed in the media emphasize the need for a thorough discussion highlighting the long-term positive potential and its connection with sustainable development. It's suggested to validate the proposed model for university mergers through future studies, employing qualitative research and mixed methods.

**Originality/Value** - This study foregrounds the higher education reform in the context of sustainable development, offering an updated perspective on the long-term benefits it might bring to Moldovan society.

**Keywords** - Mergers, Strategic Management, Universities, Higher Education, Sustainable Development, Consolidation Processes.

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## INTRODUCTION

In the current global context, university reform and sustainable development are closely interconnected, reflecting the pivotal role that higher education institutions play in shaping a sustainable future. Universities are not just centers of academic excellence and innovation but also catalysts for change, promoting concepts, values, and practices that align human development with the principles of sustainability. By integrating sustainable development into educational structures, curricula, and research, universities become driving forces in addressing current challenges, from climate change to inequalities, ensuring that future generations are equipped to build a more equitable, resilient, and prosperous world for all.

This field is marked by intense cross-border competition in educational services and research products, putting universities before a dual imperative: to collaborate and compete simultaneously. Universities strive for access to financial resources, attracting exceptional students, recruiting elite faculty, innovative research, building and maintaining a solid reputation, and achieving favorable positions in global rankings. The current global market dynamics encourage institutional mergers, making it a crucial strategic direction for many universities. Other tactics, highlighted by Harman and Harman (2008, p. 99), involve informal collaborations, business partnerships, strategic alliances, networks, and consortia at regional, national, and global levels, as well as combining academic and administrative departments within institutions. This study focuses on the strategic approach to university mergers, specifically on the case of the Republic of Moldova. Merging them poses a significant challenge, both theoretically and practically. This material aims to describe and explore the specialized literature on this topic.

Various theoretical concepts underlying the discussion on strategic university mergers fall into the theory of social identity, as well as strategic and procedural theories on mergers and acquisitions (M&A) (Cai, 2006; Cartwright and Schoenberg, 2006; Gleibs et al., 2013). In the public sphere, the analysis of the idea of consolidation is based on the principles of "New Public Management" (NPM) and "public value management" (Bryson et al., 2017; Hartley et al., 2017). Considering the developments in "New Public Management," university administration can be perceived as an inherently complex process, akin to the functioning mechanisms of a corporation (Dunleavy and Hood, 1994; Dunleavy et al., 2006).

University reform in the Republic of Moldova reflects the country's efforts to align with European education standards and ensure enhanced education quality for its citizens. In the context of globalization and the new status of our country pertaining to European integration, in 2022 Moldova recognized the need for a profound revision of its higher education system to effectively respond to contemporary socio-economic challenges. The reform aims to improve university structures, update study programs, promote research, and ensure a closer connection with the labor market. Moreover, this reform is directed towards greater institutional autonomy, encouraging universities to become more competitive and adaptable to the rapid changes of the 21st century. In an ever-evolving educational landscape, the Republic of Moldova aims to lay the foundations for modern, inclusive, and high-quality higher education.

### Review of Literature Pertinent to University Mergers

Often, the term "education" is associated with what happens inside the classroom. However, "learning" in ESD (Education for Sustainable Development) takes place in a wide variety of social contexts. This encompasses what occurs within the education system and extends into daily life and even the professional realm (UNESCO 2004). Therefore, everyone can benefit from ESD, aligning with the vision of DESD (Decade of Education for Sustainable Development) (UNESCO 2005).

In relation to the discussed subject of educational reform in the Republic of Moldova, it is essential to define the concept of "strategic mergers". These are formal combinations of two or more organizations into a single entity, deliberately planned to more effectively address external challenges and opportunities (Harman and Harman, 2003). In the context of higher education, strategic mergers are described as strategies to "merge colleges for mutual growth" (Martin and Samels, 2002). When two institutions merge, terms such as M&A (Mergers & Acquisitions), consolidation processes, takeovers, mergers, acquisitions, and alliances are used. Although these terms should not always be treated as synonyms, they are often interchangeably used. In a merger, one company takes over another, including all assets and liabilities. Through consolidation, two or more companies unite to form a newer, larger organization. All assets and liabilities of each company become property of the new entity.

Diagnosing the trends regarding changes in higher education has been developed based on numerous studies and is described in detail in specialized literature. One of the clear major trends is the development of larger and more potent providers of educational services and research. Furthermore, in the sector of higher education institutions (HEIs), several trends anticipate strategic changes in universities:

a) The large and increasing diversity of universities; the educational sector comprises organizations that substantially differ in terms of their founding structure, activity, quality, specialization, and size. b) Internationalization, leading to increased mobility of students, researchers, programs, and institutions as a whole. c) Privatization and commercialization of global education, where higher education becomes a service in the realm of "private goods", and science becomes an intellectual product. d) Development of the "entrepreneurial university" model. e) Reduction of state participation in subsidizing or even co-financing universities. f) The new globally competitive educational environment creates strong incentives for competition among institutions, but simultaneously prompts many of them to decide to cooperate, following various partnership types.

For HEIs, the implementation of merger plans should lead to the fulfillment of their mission and the achievement of strategic objectives related to improving research and education, and/or implementing the third mission of universities. Entrepreneurial tendencies in university culture are reflected in the orientation towards innovation, scientific activities conducted in cooperation with the industry, the application of "quasi-business" and "quasi-corporate" organizational solutions, and revenue generation from educational and scientific activities. "Entrepreneurial" universities implement a market mission and create competitive strategies, use methods of accountability and governance, and make decisions based on a managerial model rather than a collegial one. Mergers can be seen as a manifestation of the development of entrepreneurial university formation and academic entrepreneurship, in relation to both public and private HEIs.

Educational and operational activities (Aula & Tienari, 2011; Tirronen & Nokkala, 2009) hold a central place in universities. Generally, European universities, for instance, struggle to compete with their American counterparts as they are relatively small and underfunded. Lang (2003), in analyzing the reasons for mergers among public universities, highlights that governments want new programs at relatively reduced marginal costs. Moreover, mergers can decrease the sunk costs of prior investments since facilities can be used more efficiently. Some studies have also confirmed the financial factors of many mergers in higher education institutions (Eastman & Lang, 2001), emphasizing that university mergers can lead to significant economies of scale.

Following the works of Pinheiro et al. (2017) and Sułkowski (2017), it is possible to point out several strategic objectives concerning university mergers:

- (1) increasing the efficacy and efficiency of university operations;
- (2) limiting the fragmentation of the higher education system;
- (3) broadening student access to the educational network;
- (4) strengthening the autonomy, responsibility, and accountability of the university;

- (5) creating larger universities, expanding scientific, educational, and operational activities, achieving economies of scale and "critical mass";
- (6) optimizing operational costs;
- (7) bolstering the competitiveness of a specific university at the national level;
- (8) supporting university competitiveness at the international level;
- (9) enhancing the competitiveness and visibility of the entire country and its national education system on the international stage;
- (10) satisfying the needs of various stakeholders, particularly students and employers, in a more efficient manner;
- (11) implementing effective strategic management mechanisms;
- (12) restructuring and rationalizing university management;
- (13) transitioning the competitive model to oligopolistic or even monopolistic in the case of private universities;
- (14) diversifying educational offerings; and
- (15) expanding the market (primarily in the case of private universities).

All stakeholders involved in consolidating universities could benefit from a successful merger, as it implies a stronger institution, poised to compete better in the current global economy and become more efficient.

In the following section, the author will describe the primary issues that led to the merger reform of universities.

### **Main Issues Leading to the Need for Reform**

The reform of higher education and research in the Republic of Moldova faces significant challenges that underscore the need for a deep change in the system. One of the primary challenges is adaptability to the EU rigors, with the aim of aligning the system with the standards and requirements of the European Union to ensure competitive and innovative higher education.

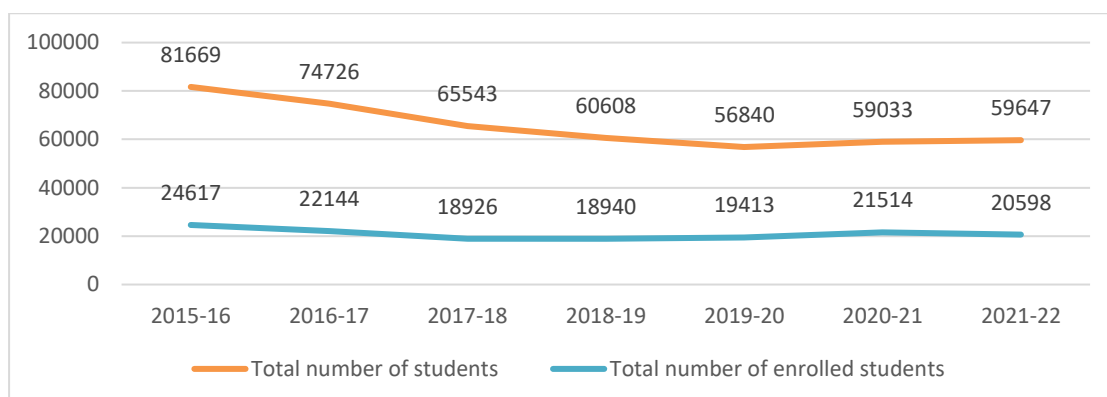
Another pressing issue is the lack of a strong link between research and teaching. Research-based teaching and teaching-based research are inadequately represented within universities, compromising the quality and relevance of the education provided. The situation is further exacerbated by demographic and economic challenges. Demographic decline, rising youth unemployment, and the economic implications of the worst health crisis of this century amplify pressures on the system. Additionally, the challenges of globalization and competition for resources arise. The higher education system in the Republic of Moldova competes to attract European and international funding, in a continually changing global landscape. This is heightened by the emergence of new technologies and teaching-learning methods that require adaptation and innovation. In conclusion, reform is essential in the face of these complex challenges to ensure a sustainable and competitive future for higher education and research in the Republic of Moldova.

The educational system in the Republic of Moldova has faced several significant difficulties recently. These include a substantial reduction in the number of students, frequent school dropout, especially among young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, and a noticeable lack of motivation to learn. Moreover, the existence of a large number of publicly funded university institutions raises questions about the efficient allocation of resources.

These observations are not just personal conclusions but are confirmed by the study "Comprehensive Assessment of the Educational Sector in the Republic of Moldova," as well as analyses of other reports focusing on the students' perspective on the education system.

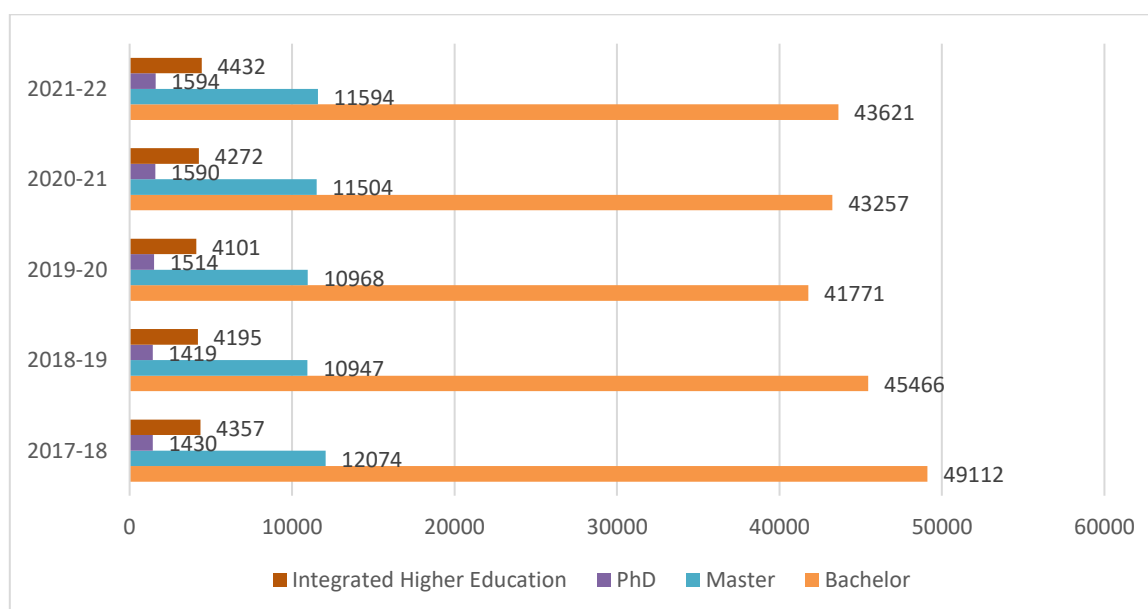
The demographic decline, exacerbated by population migration and decreasing birth rates, has had a direct impact on the number of pupils and students. According to data provided by BNS, there has been a significant decrease at all educational levels, except for early education, which has seen a slight increase.

For the academic year 2021-2022, the number of students enrolled in higher education was approximately 59.7 thousand, representing a slight increase from the previous year. These students are distributed across 24 university institutions, most of which are public. Surprisingly, the majority of students in public universities pay for their education, with only a small percentage receiving free studies. This raises questions about accessibility and funding of higher education in the Republic of Moldova.



**Figure 1: Dynamics of the total number of students and enrolled students (thousands) in higher education institutions.**

Source: Impact analysis of the draft Government Decision on the reorganization by merger (absorption) of some institutions in the fields of education, research and innovation



**Figure 2: Dynamics of the total number of students at all cycles in public higher education institutions**

Source: Impact analysis of the draft Government Decision on the reorganization by merger (absorption) of some institutions in the fields of education, research and innovation



The higher education system in the Republic of Moldova faces significant challenges. One evident aspect is the overpopulation of universities, with many institutions vying for a diminishing number of students. Many of these universities, mostly small in size, operate with an infrastructure and administration that have not adapted to demographic changes. This renders them inefficient, consuming resources without delivering commensurate quality education. Another collateral effect of university overpopulation is excessive spending. Every university requires its own administrative resources, regardless of whether it has 200 or 10,000 students. This leads to inefficient resource and funding utilization. Moreover, the smaller the enrollment capacity, the higher the costs per student.

An additional issue is the lack of efficiency in university research. The current system does not foster collaboration between research and education. This is compounded by insufficient research funding and a lack of modern infrastructure. In fact, research funding in Moldova is significantly below the European average, reflecting a diminished commitment to scientific advancement.

While the number of doctoral students has seen a slight increase, this doesn't reflect a rise in general interest in research. A research career does not appear to be appealing to Moldovan youth, which is evidenced by the reduced number of researchers relative to the total population.

Compared to other states in the region, Moldova struggles with efficiency and performance in higher education. According to international indices, such as the Global Competitiveness Index, Moldova lags behind many European countries, including its Baltic neighbors and Nordic nations.

In conclusion, the Republic of Moldova needs to address these issues if it aims to enhance its higher education system and become more competitive on the international stage. Consolidating universities and increasing research funding are essential steps in this direction.

### **Description of the reform and the main forms of university financing**

The integration of sustainable development principles into educational strategies is a paramount priority set by the Government, as highlighted in the National Action Plan. This commitment is also emphasized in the Activity Program of the Republic of Moldova's Government, in the National Program for Research and Innovation (2020-2023), as well as in the projected "Education-2030" Strategy, which extends until the year 2030. This reflects a consistent and integrated approach across various public policy documents, underlining the country's long-term strategic vision for the education sector.

In this context, in 2022, the Republic of Moldova underwent a comprehensive restructuring of institutions in the fields of education, research, and innovation through Decision No. 485 dated 13-07-2022 regarding the reorganization by merger (absorption) of certain institutions in the areas of education, research, and innovation and the amendment of certain government decisions. This decision pertains to the reorganization of several institutions in the fields of education, research, and innovation in the Republic of Moldova. The restructuring took place through the merging (absorption) of some institutions into larger ones, as described:

- a) The State University of Moldova absorbed 14 different institutions, including the Public Administration Academy, the "Andrei Lupan" Scientific Library, various research institutes, and the "Alexandru Ciubotaru" National Botanical Garden.
- b) The Technical University of Moldova absorbed 4 institutions, among which are the State Agrarian University of Moldova and various research institutes.
- c) The "Ion Creangă" State Pedagogical University of Chișinău will absorb 3 institutions, including the State University of Tiraspol.
- d) The Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova will incorporate the National Institute of Economic Research.

The decision ensured the following significant aspects:

- The research structures of the absorbed institutions will remain autonomous until the end of 2023.
- The rights and obligations of the absorbed institutions will be fully transferred to the absorbing institutions.
- The founder status for certain institutions, such as the Academy of Music, Theatre, and Fine Arts, is transferred from one ministry to another.
- The Ministry of Education and Research will establish special committees for reorganization and asset transfer.
- The staff and students of the absorbed institutions will be transferred to the absorbing institutions in accordance with labor legislation and current academic provisions. The Ministry of Education and Research, in collaboration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, will explore the possibility of merging two higher education institutions related to training personnel for national security.

The regulatory procedure defining the method of university financing is Government Decision No.343/2020 "Methodology for Budgetary Financing of Public Higher Education Institutions". It establishes the mechanisms for allocating funds to public higher education institutions. These mechanisms are based on a standard-funding, calculated based on a standard cost per student, adjustment coefficients, and the complexity of study programs. In addition to this funding, compensatory funds can also be allocated to encourage performance and complementary funds intended for infrastructure modernization.

Budgetary allocations focus on bachelor's and master's programs that are accredited or provisionally authorized by the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research or other similar international agencies.

The main expenses covered by these allocations include the salaries of staff involved in education and research, the purchase of necessary goods and services, and investments in equipment and technology for research and education.

The proposed financial structure distributes budgetary allocations as follows:

- 75% standard funding;
- 20% compensatory funding for performance;
- 5% complementary funding for modernization.

To calculate the allocations per student, institutions use a formula that takes into account the actual number of students, adjusted by specific coefficients for forms of education and study programs. These coefficients are stipulated in specific annexes of the methodology.

A crucial aspect of this methodology is the evaluation of institutional performance, which relies on specific indicators in areas such as the teaching-learning process, scientific research, internationalization, and social responsibility.

In conclusion, this methodology offers a comprehensive and detailed framework for financing public higher education institutions, combining performance criteria, operational needs, and incentives for development and excellence.

The assessment of public expenditures allocated to higher education for the period 2018-2022 indicates an upward trend in the financing provided to public higher education institutions. In 2018, the allocated funds amounted to 912.5 million lei, while in 2022, the amount increased to 1105.8 million lei, marking a growth of 17.5%. It's noteworthy that this budget increase occurred in a context where the number of students decreased by 3014 individuals, according to Table No.1.

**Table 1****Expenditures on higher education institutions for 2018-2022**

<b>Years High Education Budget</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>High Education Total Expenditures, mil. Lei</b>	912,5	997,9	1093,3	1051,6	1105,8
<b>Public financed enrolled students</b>	27658	25107	24431	25821	24644
<b>Medium costs per student, lei</b>	32991,7	39744,8	44545,9	40700	44900

Source: Ministry of Finance

Research, development, and innovation in the Republic of Moldova face, like many other vital sectors, the challenge of limited institutional and human capacities. These are largely the result of a chronic lack of funding. According to data from Table No.2, the percentage of R&D expenditures relative to GDP for the period 2010-2018 recorded a decline of over 43%, as stated in the third biennial updated report of the Republic of Moldova on the Climate Change Convention of 2021.

**Table 2****Expenditure and salaries in the field of research, development and innovation in Moldova**

<b>Years</b>	<b>Indicators</b>		
	<b>RDI expenditures, % from GDP</b>	<b>Researches salaries, % medium salary in economy</b>	<b>Expenditures on scientific, % from total RDI financing</b>
<b>2010</b>	0.44	100.24	2.59
<b>2011</b>	0.4	98.09	4.86
<b>2012</b>	0.42	100.7	3.72
<b>2013</b>	0.35	105.33	3.74
<b>2014</b>	0.37	108.81	5.92
<b>2015</b>	0.37	104.27	4.32
<b>2016</b>	0.33	95.99	2.22
<b>2017</b>	0.26	86.28	3.55
<b>2018</b>	0.25		2.75

Source: <http://indicator.idsi.md/>



Given this context, it is vital to underline that the potential of research is not maximized for the benefit of the educational process, and students are often excluded from research activities. This narrows their ability to confront current topics and refine their research skills.

Additionally, we have observed inefficiencies related to the structure of academic programs. While the autonomy of higher education institutions is a crucial pillar and should be encouraged and optimized in the Republic of Moldova, the relevance of the curriculum should not be overlooked. Unfortunately, many of the Moldovan public universities channel their limited resources into programs that don't align properly with market needs or the interests of students and employers. Programs that don't have a clear impact are often more costly, given that funds are misdirected and facilities are not used efficiently. Furthermore, there's a risk that a conglomerate of smaller universities offers similar programs, creating redundancy in educational offerings.

Based on the Report on the rationalization process of expenditures in the educational systems and various studies from the Moldovan educational sector, this reform was proposed, outlining a clear direction for the revitalization of higher education and research.

The said reform considers reconfiguring the university network, enhancing the synergy between research and academia, and equitably distributing funds to support academic staff and researchers.

**University Reconfiguration** - By absorbing smaller universities, the goal is to maintain 11 foundational universities that meet the needs of the Republic of Moldova.

**Research Revitalization** - Aiming at integrating research institutions into universities, simultaneously ensuring separate research funding and strengthening the link between research activities and the educational process.

**Efficient Investments** - A key priority should be increasing the salaries of university faculty and researchers, aiming to raise the quality standard and competitiveness of universities nationally and internationally.

**Focus on Academic Expertise** - By 2030, the aim is for 80% of the teaching staff to have a scientific title, thus emphasizing high-quality teaching.

**Research Boost** - Encouraging an increase in research projects won by universities in national and international competitions, with a goal of 10% by 2030.

Similar reforms to those in the Republic of Moldova have been implemented in the Baltic States and Denmark, the latter particularly catching our eye. It's remarkable that the Danish higher education system ranks in the top five globally. Thus, seven of the eight universities in Denmark consistently place in the top 1,000 in the prestigious university rankings published annually by Times Higher Education.

According to the Ministry of Higher Education and Science of Denmark, the initiative began in 2003 with the strengthening of university autonomy. In 2007, a crucial phase was announced: the merger of universities with various research institutions. Before this reconfiguration, Denmark hosted 25 academic and research entities, of which 12 were universities. After the reform, the number dropped to eight universities and three research institutions.

This change was met with skepticism, especially from the academic community, similar to reactions in the Republic of Moldova. However, Danish officials emphasized that, through this restructuring, the new universities would experience professional synergies, thus optimizing the use of the country's research resources and increasing the chances of obtaining EU funding.

A notable effect of this reform is the rise of three universities – the University of Copenhagen, Aarhus University, and the Technical University of Denmark – which have ranked among the most prominent educational institutions in Europe. They now host two-thirds of the country's public research and academic activities. Moreover, all three were recognized in the QS World University Rankings 2023, which evaluates institutions based on various criteria, including reputation among academics and employers, citations, student-to-teacher ratio, and international attractiveness.

This reform, when properly implemented, will bring significant improvements to the educational and research sector in the Republic of Moldova. Through reorganization and focus, a higher quality and increased relevance of higher education can be achieved, marking a new and prosperous chapter for education in Moldova.

### **Conclusions:**

In the context of increasing cross-border competition in education and research, universities face a delicate balance between collaboration and competition. This is highlighted by the need to attract financial resources, academic and student talent, and to maintain a trustworthy reputation. The global dynamic has led many universities to opt for mergers as an essential strategy, while various other tactics involve informal collaborations and global partnerships. The theoretical discussion regarding university mergers falls within social identity theory and strategic and procedural theories. The university reform in the Republic of Moldova comes in response to the need to align with European standards and to ensure the quality of education. Merger strategies are seen as ways to respond to external challenges, and specialized literature emphasizes the increase of educational and research service providers as a major trend. Additionally, various strategic trends in universities include internationalization, privatization, commercialization, and the "entrepreneurial university" model. University mergers can bring significant economies of scale and increased competitiveness. Successful mergers are expected to create stronger and more adaptable institutions in today's global economy.

The reform of higher education and research in the Republic of Moldova is imperative in the face of a series of complex challenges facing the country. Adaptability to European Union standards, the unsatisfactory link between teaching and research, as well as current demographic and economic pressures underscore the need for significant change. Moreover, global competition for resources, technological changes, and the need for innovation push the system to a tipping point. Demographic decline, migration, and the impact of the health crisis amplify these challenges, with a decreasing number of students spread across an excessive number of university institutions.

Inefficiency, excessive costs, and underfunding of scientific research are factors that exacerbate the situation and reduce the appeal of a research career in the Republic of Moldova. Compared to neighboring countries, Moldova lags in terms of higher education competitiveness. To address these challenges and create a competitive and innovative higher education system, Moldova must take decisive actions to consolidate and adequately fund the sector.

In 2022, the Republic of Moldova underwent significant restructuring in the realm of education, research, and innovation, marking an ambitious initiative to consolidate and streamline universities. Adopted measures, such as the absorption of smaller institutions by larger ones, aim at optimizing resources and harnessing the country's educational and research potential. This process was also supported by a detailed funding methodology that incorporates performance criteria, operational needs, and incentives for growth and excellence. However, it was noted that funding in the research and innovation sector remained a sensitive point, having significantly decreased over recent years. Despite this decline, the importance of maximizing research potential for the benefit of students and society as a whole was emphasized. The proposed reform, aiming at a clear direction for revitalizing higher education and research, provides a new framework through which the Republic of Moldova seeks to strengthen its educational system and address current and future needs more efficiently. Through this reform, Moldova expects to redefine its position on the regional and international education and research map.

## Recommendations:

1. **Model after Successful Educational Systems:** The Republic of Moldova should draw inspiration from the successful models of other countries in higher education and research. For instance, Nordic countries like Finland and Sweden have implemented educational reforms that focus on research, innovation, and international collaboration.
2. **Periodic Assessment:** Implement a periodic evaluation, at 3-5 year intervals, on the reform's impact on education quality, research performance, and the system's adaptability to global changes. This will aid in identifying weak points and adjusting direction if necessary.
3. **Invest in Research Infrastructure:** Prioritize fund allocation for the modernization and expansion of labs, libraries, and other essential resources for research and innovation.
4. **Promote International Collaborations:** Encourage universities in the Republic of Moldova to establish partnerships with higher education institutions and research centers in Europe and other parts of the world.
5. **Review Funding Criteria:** Given the reduced research funding, the government should reevaluate how resources are allocated, emphasizing quality, innovation, and the social impact of projects.
6. **Continuous Training of Teaching Staff:** Launch ongoing training programs for teachers and researchers to keep them updated on the latest trends in their fields and to implement innovative teaching and research methods.
7. **Encourage Student and Faculty Mobility:** Offer scholarships and incentives for students and faculty to study, teach, or conduct research abroad.
8. **Interlink with the Private Sector:** Establish closer ties between universities and industry to align research with market needs and facilitate technology transfer.
9. **Transparency and Communication:** Ensure open communication with all stakeholders - students, parents, teachers, employers - about the goals of the reform and the progress made.
10. **Comparative Analysis:** Periodically study the position of the Republic of Moldova in international education and research rankings to assess progress and identify areas requiring further improvements.

In conclusion, for the Republic of Moldova to achieve its objectives in the realm of higher education and research, it is essential to adopt an adaptable, data-driven, and forward-looking approach that takes into account global trends and challenges. This reform must not only incorporate global trends and challenges but also the principles of sustainable development, thereby ensuring a sustainable and prosperous future for the nation.

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Analiza de impact la proiectul Hotărârii de Guvern Cu privire la reorganizarea prin fuziune (absorbție) a unor instituții din domeniile educației, cercetării și inovării

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<https://ufm.dk/en>;

<https://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings/world-university-rankings/2023>

Cheltuielile bugetului public național pentru perioada 2018-2020, Ministerul Finanțelor