

Report of the second and third trainings under the UNECE UNDA capacity-building programme in follow-up to the Innovation for Sustainable Development Review of Moldova

Title (2nd training): Supporting regional and sectoral innovation

Title (3rd training): Supporting technology transfer from public research organizations

Dates: 26 January 2023, 9.30-13.30 (GMT+2) and 27 January 2023, 9.30-13.30 (GMT+2)

Format: Online on Zoom

Background: Following the publication of the [Innovation for Sustainable Development Review of Moldova](#) in 2022, the Ministry of Education and Research (MER) of the Republic of Moldova requested support from UNECE to convert some of the recommendations from the Review into a Roadmap on Innovation and Technology Transfer. This Roadmap (available in [English](#) and [Romanian](#)) was finalized in October 2022 following consultations with several relevant local stakeholder groups.

These follow-up online trainings (the second and third in a series of three) were organized by UNECE and MER to support the implementation of specific measures under the Roadmap.

Specifically, they discussed practical ways to address the Roadmap's Strategic Goals (SGs), as follows:

The second training focused on SG3 (Innovation and technology transfer infrastructure is tied to priority areas identified under the Smart Specialization Strategy (S3) actions), and on SG6 (A clear regional focus for innovation and technology transfer infrastructure has been adopted).

The third training focused on SG4 (A national technology transfer office is established). The trainings were delivered by Ms. Lisa Cowey, author of the Roadmap, with support from Mr. Sergiu Porcescu, local expert.

Participants: 22 attendees, representing the Ministry of Education and Research (MER), Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finances, National Agency for R&D, National Agency for IPR, Diaspora Relations Bureau, Academy of Sciences, State University of Medicine and Pharmacy, State University of Moldova, Regional Development Agency North, Chamber of Trade and Industry, Academy of Economic Studies, Comrat State University, Start-Up Moldova Foundation.

The screenshot shows a Zoom meeting interface. On the left, a presentation slide is displayed with the title "Este Sistemul Regional de Inovare 'competitiv'?" and two bullet points. The slide also features logos for the Ministry of Economic Affairs and UNECE. On the right, a grid of participants is visible, including Vadim IATCHEV..., Serghei Borlac, Iulia Vacarenco, and others. The meeting title at the top is "Zoom Meeting" and the system tray at the bottom shows the time as 12:15 PM on 26/01/2023.

Este Sistemul Regional de Inovare 'competitiv'?

- "Deficitul regional specific reprezintă un impediment important pentru crearea unui sistem regional de inovare competitiv".
- "Numai în cazul în care procesul de analiză comparativă cu alți concurenți potențiali arată un grad suficient de probabilitate ca regiunea respectivă să aibă o șansă echitabilă de a reuși în competiția cu celelalte regiuni, are sens să se aloce resurse substanțiale pentru o strategie regională de inovare".

Logos:

Participants: kizideli, Vadim IATCHEV..., Serghei Borlac, Iulia Vacarenco, Olga Oprea, Valeriu Gonciar, Andrei Moisei A..., Liliana Staver A..., Sergiu Porcescu.

Summary of the discussions:

26 January:

The event started with interventions from the UNECE and MER, setting the scene for the seminar and presenting the wider context of UNECE-Moldova collaboration in the area of innovation policy and technology transfer. The representative of MER highlighted that the trainings were a part of a larger effort that aims to improve the national innovation system by filling legislative gaps, developing policies that support the link between industry and research, and strengthening the capacities of the innovation sector. The Innovation for Sustainable Development Review of Moldova, the Roadmap, and the trainings will serve as the basis for further development of the innovation sector in line with the country's larger sustainable development efforts. In 2023, the Ministry intends to continue the collaboration with UNECE and further develop public policy documents on innovation and technology transfer.

1. The first session was dedicated to the topic of developing a functional national innovation system (NIS). The trainer presented a brief history, definition and a conceptual model of an NIS. During the practical session, the audience, split into groups, was tasked to map the Moldovan National Innovation System, taking into consideration the national legislative frameworks, finance mechanisms, main actors, networks and institutions, scientific / research capacity and capacity to adopt new technology contracts.
2. The second session covered innovation infrastructures (definitions, types and examples). During the group exercise, participants elaborated on the existing innovation infrastructure in Moldova. The specific case of the innovation ecosystem and infrastructure from the Gagauzia region served as a showcase during the practical session.
3. Session three covered regional and sectoral innovation systems. After presenting the on-going evolution of the IS concept (National Innovation System, Regional Innovation Systems, Sectorial Innovation Systems, Open innovation ecosystem) the international trainer introduced the examples of several established and well-functioning innovation systems. A particular attention was given to

the topic of regional innovation systems in the transition economies. During the practical exercise, three groups carried out a regional SWOT for a cluster.

27 January:

The session was opened by the UNECE, who highlighted the importance of public research organisations (PROs) in the innovation system.

- 1.** The first session provided an overview of Technology Transfer and Knowledge Exchange mechanisms within PROs. The entire spectrum of stakeholder engagement in Technology Transfer and Knowledge Exchange was presented and discussed. During the group exercise, the groups selected types of technology transfer/knowledge transfer/knowledge exchange (TT/KT/KE) activities that would fit a known PRO, outlining for each one the rationale of the selection and the skills that would be needed by researchers and support staff to make it successful. During the second practical session, the groups selected one skill set needed by researchers for TT/KT/KE and one for support staff, and discussed how skills could be built and retained over a 3 to 10 year period.
- 2.** The second session presented ways of building a successful TT/KT activity at a PRO, including through management support, underlying regulation and gaining researcher 'buy-in'. The case of the GITA Technology Transfer Pilot Project (TTPP) was shown as a good practice. During the group exercise, the audience discussed how researchers could be motivated to engage more in TT, and potential 'rewards'. Also, the participants elaborated on what the government, universities and research institutes could do in this regard.
- 3.** The third session introduced the 'Proof of Concept' scheme for funding Technology Transfer. During the session, the international trainer presented different types of KE/TT funding (Proof of Concept, technology commercialisation grant, collaborative research grants, innovation vouchers). As part of the practical activity, the participants worked together in order to design a Proof of Concept grant scheme, developing its aims and objectives, its KPIs, the eligibility criteria for projects, the type of activities to be funded, the overall level of funding, and mechanism for administering the grant scheme.