

	Strategy of the Public Institution Technical University of Moldova in the fields of research and innovation for the years 2024-2027	Code: STR-43-DCI
		1st edition
		Revision 0

**APPROVED AT TUM SENATE MEETING
OF JANUARY 30, 2024, MINUTE NO. 7**

Strategy of the Public Institution Technical University of Moldova in the fields of research and innovation for the years 2024-2027

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I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. **The strategy of the Public Institution Technical University of Moldova** (hereinafter TUM) in the fields of research and innovation for the years 2024-2027 was developed based on the National Program in the fields of research and innovation for the years 2024-2027 - HG no.1049/2023.
2. **The national development strategy** "European Moldova 2030", approved by Law no. 315/2022, sets out the development objectives, policy directions and priority interventions aimed at modernizing all spheres of political and socio-economic life in order to bring the Republic of Moldova closer to European standards and values, which will ensure the process of accession of our country to the European Union.
3. **The National Programme for Research and Innovation** (hereafter PNDCI) for the years 2024-2027 provides for the gradual increase of funds allocated for research and development by 0.1 percent of GDP each year; review of the ways of financing science based on the performance of organizations in the field of research and innovation, including research projects according to the usefulness of their results; balancing the resources allocated to basic and applied research; orienting applied research towards topics relevant for socio-economic development; creating conditions for the development and strengthening of links between the research and business environment; facilitating the transfer of technologies and innovations to support entrepreneurship, efficient use of resources and increase the competitiveness of the national economy.
4. Particular emphasis in the PNDCI will be placed on the integration into the European Research Area by progressively transforming the internal functioning of R&D organizations and by developing links with EU universities, including by taking full advantage of the opportunities arising from the country's status as an associated country to the European Framework Programme for Research and Innovation "Horizon Europe".
5. **TUM Research and Innovation Strategy** is the main document that sets out the strategic priorities and development objectives in the fields of research and innovation at TUM.

II. UTM MISSION AND VISION FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

6. The scientific research activity at TUM is coordinated by the Senate, and the guidance, monitoring and internal evaluation of research activities is ensured by the TUM Scientific Council.
7. UTM promotes the development of a fundamental and applied research environment centered on technological progress and innovation. We are competitive both nationally and internationally

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in knowledge generation and knowledge transfer with direct impact on growth scientific performance, the quality of services to the economic and social environment and the generation of innovative products and services.

8. The vision of the Technical University of Moldova is to be a national leader in higher education through fundamental and applied scientific research, technology transfer and digitization with the major objective of becoming a University anchored in the European Space of education, research and innovation.
9. TUM assumes its mission as a catalyst of an innovative and participatory scientific research environment by generating relevant knowledge through scientific research, creation and innovation and transferable into innovative solutions, technologies and products for society.
10. TUM promotes the correct principles of deontology and ethics of scientific research for the training, development and motivation of human resources working in the field of research.

III. SITUATION ANALYSIS

11. In general, the research and innovation system of the Republic of Moldova is in a precarious situation and in a process of contraction, with the number of people in the system shrinking. As of December 31, 2023, 473 scientific researchers are active in the research and innovation system at TUM. In terms of the scientific results obtained by UTM compared to the investments in research, which come from MEC, ANCD and co-financing the UTM research system performs adequately.
12. The SWOT analysis allowed to determine the strengths and weaknesses in this area, possible opportunities and threats.
13. **Strengths:**
 - TUM is a nationally and internationally recognized university, which through its scientific activity has become a significant element in the development of society;
 - Higher education at TUM is research-based;
 - TUM operates 3 institutes and 16 research centers;
 - academic staff has a high scientific background: 2 academicians two corresponding members of the ASM 31 habilitated doctors, 364 doctors of science;
 - TUM has developed and modern research infrastructure (<https://cercetari.utm.md/>);
 - TUM has extensive experience of obtaining research funding through 94 national projects and grants, including 36 State Program projects, 3 bilateral projects, 1 innovation project, 1 postdoctoral project, 1 institutional project, 16 contracts

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economic, and 36 technical and scientific collaboration contracts, 7 cross-border projects as well as 2 international projects (December 2023);

- Over 100 papers indexed in WoS and Scopus and over 300 papers indexed in other databases were published at TUM in 2023;
- In 2023 TUM obtained 12 sub-programs for institutional funding for 2024-2027;
- TUM is involved in cooperation with other universities and research centers both nationally and internationally;
- TUM scientific and teaching staff have free access to a collection of about 300 000 titles of scientific works of the TUM library and free access to 14 prestigious databases;
- the absolute majority of teachers are registered in international databases;
- running Doctoral Schools with 138 doctoral students (January 2023);
- At TUM we have a total of 156 authorized persons with the right to manage doctoral students;
- the scientific output, both in the form of articles in international scientific journals and patents, is quantitatively adequate in relation to the funding available;

14. **Weak points:**

- Low salaries, below the average salary in the economy and so far lower than those for teaching in higher education, are not attractive for researchers, especially experienced ones;
- modest funding of national projects, which makes research unattractive (currently, the level of research funding in the Republic of Moldova is low and is ten times lower than the EU average and twice lower than the country with the lowest level of funding in the EU - source PNDCI);
- The very low level of research infrastructure in some experimental areas aggravates the lack of attractiveness and creates an obstacle to performing high-performance research and cooperation with the business sector;
- research is not fully institutionalized in the first and second cycle, only partially intervening during the period of doctoral thesis development;
- The research system at TUM is still fragmented;
- In general, institutional funding has been reduced to a level where the flow of resources is no longer sufficient to cover the basic and maintenance needs of the research infrastructure at TUM;
- High average age of academic staff involved in research;

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- modest knowledge of languages of international communication by scientific and teaching staff;
- weak relations with the business community for the implementation of scientific research results and modest experience in intellectual property commercialization issues;
- predominantly high teaching load of scientific and teaching staff, which reduces the amount of time allocated to research.

15. Opportunities:

- In the perspective of Moldova's accession to the EU, the volume of foreign investments in various economic sectors is expected to increase. These investments can also be attracted in the technical-scientific sector, in particular research and innovation;
- The EU' s policy of opening access to research infrastructures, including through funding programs dedicated to researchers from disadvantaged countries (e.g. MSCA Cofund, Joint Research Centre (JRC) infrastructure access program), as well as open science policies, create opportunities for TUM researchers to access infrastructure and data;
- there are opportunities for young people from TUM to get financial support through the WIDENING program of Horizon Europe;
- strengthening and accelerated development of the research system in correlation with teaching-learning;
- joint efforts can lead to the advancement of TUM in international rankings, which would favor the increase of prestige and attractiveness of TUM;
- The creation of a centralized platform for collecting and processing papers, patents, medals, etc. obtained in research will allow better management and community information about the results obtained at TUM;
- the existence of opportunities to form partnerships with research teams from EU countries in order to obtain funding from Horizon EUROPA, EUREKA, COST, etc.);
- access to bilateral grant programs with Romania, Germany, Turkey etc.

16. Threats:

- Even if the research salary reference value has been increased at the beginning of 2024, rapid economic developments and the average wage in the economy make research development vulnerable, leading to researchers dropping out of the system;

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- a high level of brain drain, combined with difficulties in ensuring a reasonable flow of talent, can severely limit the development of research;
- insufficient research and doctoral funding.

IV. PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS GENERAL AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

17. The priorities and strategic directions for the period 2024-2027 set in the PNDCI are as follows:

Strategic priorities	Strategic directions
I. Health	Noncommunicable diseases - prevention, diagnosis and personalized treatment
	Surgical congenital malformations in children - optimization of antenatal, postnatal diagnostic techniques through imaging, biohumoral, histopathological and histopathological techniques and personalized treatment
	Communicable diseases - epidemiologic surveillance, control and response measures
	Prognosis, diagnosis, personalized treatment of COVID-19 sequelae
	Creation, maintenance and directed strengthening of somatic and mental health, algorithms and methods
	Surveillance and control of antimicrobial resistance
	Personalized medicine
	Research on issues impacting on demographic trends in the Republic of Moldova (reproductive medicine, mother and child health, geriatrics)
	Comprehensive study of the impact of environmental and social factors on the health status of the population and development of mitigation methods
II. Sustainable agriculture, security Food	Food safety and food security
	Sustainable management of agricultural ecosystems
	New technologies for processing agricultural raw materials
	Plant and animal varieties, breeds, lines and hybrids for agriculture and food
	Veterinary safety and animal welfare
	Agro-food waste recovery technologies
	Agriculture 4.0
	Innovative breeding, feeding and farming technologies for animals and poultry
III. Biotechnologies and Environmental Protection	Environmental security: the impact of biotic and abiotic factors on the environment and society
	Waste, plastics and pollutants
	Biodiversity conservation
	Green transport and smart urban mobility
	Energy-efficient buildings and infrastructure
	Emission-free agricultural and industrial technologies
	Monitoring aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems
	Biodiversity protection and conservation
	Sectoral resilience to climate change
	Biotechnologies for various application areas

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IV. Societal challenges	Economic competitiveness
	Migration, diaspora and socio-demographic change
	Current social-political processes: trends, paradigms, perspectives
	National security: geopolitical and information aspects
	Social innovations
	Harnessing human and social capital
	Making the most of national heritage
	Fighting poverty and energy vulnerability
	Innovative educational technologies and products
	Education for sustainable development
	Sustainable development of the countryside
	Environmental and product competitiveness by branch
	Technological and product competitiveness by branch
V. Innovative technologies, energy sustainable, digitalization	Innovative technologies and products
	Nanotechnologies and smart materials
	Secure energy and energy-efficient technologies
	Information and communication technology and digital development
	Fundamental research in physics, chemistry, mathematics
	Energy and cyber security
	Energy storage and the transition to clean energy

18. Research and innovation activity at TUM falls within the 5 strategic priorities listed above.

19. TUM strategy in the fields of research and innovation aims to:

- defining research and innovation priorities and objectives;
- ensuring a good research infrastructure;
- stimulating the development of the partnership between the university and the socio-economic environment, both nationally and internationally;
- developing human resources prepared for scientific research and innovation;
- involvement of the University in institutional research sub-programs, research, development and innovation projects in priority areas for the Republic of Moldova as defined by PNDCI;
- Creating a favorable framework for stimulating the scientific research activity of researchers through an increased number of publications that contribute to the University's recognition and enhanced international visibility;
- Progressive transformation of the research-innovation system at TUM with the aim of increasing the efficiency and impact of ECM funding in TUM research;
- updating the doctoral study and research programs of the TUM Doctoral School in order to carry out advanced fundamental and applied scientific research;
- attracting master students to carry out scientific research;

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- developing and modernizing TUM research infrastructure and supporting collaboration between science and business;
- integrating TUM research into the European Research Area.


20. The following general objectives are set in order to achieve the above-mentioned aim:


- **General Objective I:** *Strengthening the research and development system at TUM;*
- **General Objective II:** *Increase the contribution of the TUM R&D system to the development of society and national economy;*
- **General Objective III:** *Integrating the TUM community into the European Research Area*

21. Through the achievement of the overall objectives, the following indicators of progress will be pursued:


➤ **General Objective I** Strengthening the research and development system at TUM


Specific objectives	Actions	Progress indicators	Responsible
Specific objective 1.1. Strengthening the research and innovation TUM entities	1. TUM accreditation. Ensure accreditation of Research Centers and reaccreditation of Research Institutes. Restructuring research entities for accreditation purposes. Ensure good preparation for the assurance process.	Restructured structural units. Reports of self-evaluation prepared. TUM/Research centers/accredited/ reaccredited institutions	Pro-rector for Research, TUM Scientific Council, Scientific Research Management Directorate, directors of institutes and research centers.
	2. Strengthening the capacities of TUM to attract new national and international projects by training people university in this area.	Training realized. Project applications submitted. Projects won. Funds attracted.	Pro-rector for Research, TUM Scientific Council, Scientific Research Management Directorate
	3. Development of a system of management, record keeping and permanent monitoring of scientific results, technology and innovation. Strengthening the Directorate scientific research management.	Scientific, technological and innovation results management system developed and implemented. Access to the system via the TUM website.	Scientific Research Management Directorate, ICT Directorate.

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	4. Strengthening the capacity to publish quality scientific journals/collections. Meeting optimal conditions for JES registration in platforms and databases international journals such as WoS and Scopus.	TUM Publishing created. Files prepared for submission for inclusion in scientific databases (WoS, Scopus) JES registered in at least one database of scientific papers international.	Pro-Rector for Research, Editors-in-Chief of journals.
	5. Strengthening the capacities of writing and scholarly communication of scientific and UTM's scientific-didactic by creating the Academic Writing Center.	Writing center academic created. Operating Regulation of Center approved.	Prorector for Research, Director of the Academic Writing Center.
	6. UTM repository development. Providing online access to recognized databases.	Number of works in the repository. Number of databases with access for TUM employees. The number of accesses to the databases by scientific and teaching staff.	Prorector for Research, Director of TUM Library.
	8. Attracting young people researchers in TUM research teams. Creation of the Young Researchers Association to promote research careers among young people. Elaboration of a regulation for the functioning of the association.	Association of young researchers set up Regulation association approved	Pro-Rector for Research, Directors Institutes and Research Centers. Coordinators of the sub-programs of institutional research.
	9. Stimulation and promotion publishing as many scientific articles as possible in journals with impact factor or indexed in databases Relevant international data, monographs, chapters in books published by publishers international and national.	The volume of the performance bonus fund allocated annually.	Rector, TUM Senate, Vice-Rector for Research, Council Scientific UTM, Scientific Research Management Directorate
	10. Increasing the scientific level of scientific events organized at TUM including by indexing publications in WoS and/or Scopus.	The number of WoS and Scopus listed publications. Number of valuable participants from abroad to conferences organized by TUM.	Prorector for Research, TUM Scientific Council, Scientific Research Management Directorate. Deans of faculties

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	11. Strengthening the link between TUM and civil society/business. Strengthening the site cercetari.utm.md and social networks in order to increase the visibility of research activities at TUM. Media dissemination of results scientific achievements at TUM.	Website cercetari.utm.md updated. Social media pages created/updated. Measures to promote/disseminate scientific results. Contracts with businesses in the real sector.	Research Management Directorate scientific.

Specific objective 1.2. Strengthening human capital in research and innovation	1. Keep and increase the number of people involved in scientific research at TUM by Performance-based material incentives and attracting research funding.	Number of employed researchers.	Pro-Rector for Research, Directors Institutes and Research Centers. Coordinators of the sub-programs of institutional research.
	2. Strengthening the capacity to training qualified staff at UTM, including by attracting Scientific staff of Research Institutes. Discussion of new curricula with the participation of the scientific staff of Institutes. Increasing the involvement of the scientific staff of Institutes in the teaching process at Master cycle II and PhD cycle III.	Curriculum developed/updated. Number of researchers involved in the process of staff training.	Institute directors, faculty deans.
	3. Completion of the research teams of the UTM with young researchers from among master's students. Making the inclusion of young people in any type of no less than 25% of projects.	Number of young researchers employed. Share of young people project researchers.	Directors of Institutes and Research Centers. Coordinators of the sub-programmes of institutional research. Director of the Doctoral School.

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	4. Strengthening groups of young researchers by increasing project submissions for young researchers funded by ANCD. At annual assessment of the reports of the Research Centers and Institutes including an indicator the share of young people and the share of funding won by them.	Number of youth projects researchers submitted to the announced calls. Number of youth projects winning researchers.	Pro-Rector for Research, Directors Institutes and Research Centers. Coordinators of the sub-programs of institutional research.
	5. On the basis of the evaluation regulation received from the MEC the internal competition regulation, mechanisms and criteria for evaluation of TUM researchers. Organizing the attestation of scientific staff and competitions to fill posts scientific.	Internal competition rules for researchers drafted and approved. Number of researchers who passed the competition.	Pro-Rector for Research, Directors Institutes and Research Centers. Coordinators of the sub-programs of institutional research.
	6. Organization of annual individual reporting of results research.	Reporting template developed. Sessions reporting organized annually.	Pro-Rector for Research, Directors Institutes and Centers Research. Coordinators of the sub-programs of institutional research. Scientific Research Management Directorate.
	7. Increasing the efficiency of training young researchers through PhD.	Number of PhD students involved in research projects.	Vice-Rector for Research, Director of the Doctoral School.

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Improve access to quality research infrastructure	1. Developing TUM's own infrastructure: a) Developing the list the pressing needs of Research Centers and Institutes b) Elaboration of the medium-term development plan for TUM research infrastructures c) establishing how to attract funding internal and external procurement of machinery d) Encouraging research teams to submit joint projects to the NDA for research infrastructure	List of needs developed. Development plan developed and approved. Number of infrastructure projects submitted / won.	Pro-Rector for Research, Directors Institutes and Research Centers. Coordinators of the sub-programs of institutional research. Scientific Research Management Directorate.
	2. Connect to pan-European infrastructures under the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI). Establish a roadmap for the assessment of the UTM research infrastructure. Efforts to include equipment major scientific or UTM toolkits in the ESFRI circuit. Facilitate multilateral initiatives leading to better use and development of research infrastructures.	Roadmap developed and approved. UTM infrastructures and tools included in ESFRI. Joint infrastructure with European partners.	Pro-Rector for Research, Directors Institutes and Research Centers. Coordinators of institutional research sub-programs. Scientific Research Management Directorate.
	3. Increasing Online Visibility of UTM research infrastructures. UTM research infrastructure mapping and publishing the information on the webpage cercetări.utm.md	Number of infrastructure units visible on the website cercetări.utm.md	Scientific Research Management Directorate.

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- **General Objective II:** Increase the contribution of the R&D system to the development of society and the national economy


Specific objectives	Actions	Progress indicators	Responsible
Develop and strengthen links between research and business.	1. Strengthening cooperation between academia and business in the fields of research and innovation. Setting up a working group of representatives of TUM Research Centers and Institutes and business representatives to promote cooperation between research and business to identify priorities, modalities and resources, public and private, to support activities joint research and technology transfer.	Working group set up. Number of cooperation projects.	Management Directorate scientific research.
	2. Organization of information, dissemination and brokerage activities between academia and business to establish new partnerships and new ways of working together. The organization of at least two annual seminars for discussion.	Seminars organized	Management Directorate scientific research.
	3. Promoting talent exchange programs between TUM companies and research entities and industrial PhD programs. Identify business researchers and encourage cooperation with academics. Organize at least two round table discussions.	Organized round tables. Number of partnerships.	Management Directorate scientific research.
	4. Stimulating closure economic contracts and transfer of competences to business.	Number of economic contracts concluded.	Management Directorate scientific research.
Specific objective 2.2. Stimulating	1. Setting up a TUM technology transfer network contributing to	TUM technology transfer network created.	Management Directorate scientific research.

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innovation and technology transfer.	connecting with other national and international networks by sharing innovation experience.		ICT Directorate.
	2. Participation in innovation projects, technology transfer projects, technology transfer projects Innovation vouchers to support knowledge transfer and innovation, the intention of improving the performance and competitiveness of local companies.	Number of projects submitted. Number of projects won.	Prorector for Research, Directors of Research Institutes and Centers. Research sub-program coordinators institutional. Management Directorate scientific research.
	3. Participation in multilateral projects for infrastructure development to support economic growth and growth competitiveness of both academia and business.	Number of projects submitted. Number of projects won.	Prorector for Research, Directors of Research Institutes and Centers. Research sub-program coordinators institutional. Management Directorate scientific research.
	4. Further stimulate the filing of patent applications and maintain the life cycles of patents obtained. Permanent evidence of intellectual property protection.	Number of patents filed. Database of record of the intellectual property created.	Management Directorate scientific research. ICT Directorate.

➤ **General Objective III: Integration into the European Research Area**

Specific objectives	Actions	Progress indicators	Responsible
Objective specific 3.1. Enhancing internationalize of research	1. Increasing the number of projects won in calls for joint projects Republic Moldova and Romania.	Number of projects submitted. Number of projects won.	Prorector for Research, Directors Institutes and Centers of Research. Coordinators sub-programs of Research institutional. Address management scientific research.
	2. Involvement in research and innovation at TUM has	Number of projects submitted.	Address management

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	diaspora, especially UTM graduates employed in prestigious scientific centers of abroad. Participation in competition organized by the Office Diaspora Relations.	Number of won projects.	scientific research.
	3. Stimulating mobility in scientific staff research (internships, conferences short-term research in prestigious scientific centers of abroad, etc.). Encouraging staff participation scientific-didactic in the projects of mobilities.	Number of mobilities of researchers scientific. Number of projects mobilities won.	Prorector for Research, Directors Institutes and Centers of Research. Coordinators sub-programs of Research institutional. Address management scientific research.
	4. Promoting involvement UTM researchers in international expertise (in editorial boards of magazines indexed, members of Councils Commissions, the specialized competition, project appraisal international etc.).	Number of the expertise performed.	Prorector for Research, Directors Institutes and Centers of Research. Coordinators sub-programs of Research institutional. Address management scientific research.
Objective specific 3.2. Leverage plenary of opportunities that resides in country status associated with program-framework in domains research and innovation "Horizon Europe".	1. Increasing the participation rate with projects from the European research and innovation "Horizon Europe. Leverage opportunities arising from associated country status with Horizon Europe program. From introduced one of the criteria for annual evaluation participation with projects in the European program research and innovation "Horizon Europe".	Number of projects with a positive decision. Total number of projects submitted. Number of projects unbeaten with score above the threshold.	Prorector for Research, Directors Institutes and Centers of Research. Coordinators sub-programs of Research institutional. Address management scientific research.
	2. Systematic organization of dissemination campaigns on calls for projects open and providing assistance in application process to	Seminars by information and training organized.	Address management scientific research.
	Horizon Europe program. Organization of at least 2 information seminars and training with researchers per year.		

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V. REPORTING AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

22. Monitoring the implementation of the Strategy is ensured by the Scientific Council of TUM.
23. The realization of the objectives of the Strategy will be carried out by the Directorate of Scientific Research Management, the Directors of Institutes, Directors of Research Centers, Coordinators of research sub-programs and editors-in-chief of TUM journals in accordance with the provisions of the current document and the decisions of the Ministry of Education and Research.
24. The implementation and evaluation of this Strategy will be carried out systematically throughout the implementation period (2024-2027) and will include the elaboration of annual progress reports on the implementation of the Strategy based on progress indicators.
25. In order to ensure the transparency of the implementation processes of the Strategy, the annual monitoring reports, as well as the interim and final evaluation reports will be published on the website cercetari.utm.md
26. The Vice-Rector for Research will submit annually to the TUM Senate and the Ministry of Education and Research a report on the research results which will include information describing the progress in the implementation of this Strategy and the achievement of the planned indicators.
27. The evaluation of research activities carried out within institutional sub-programs and research projects is carried out in accordance with the institutional and project funding methodologies in the fields of research and innovation. The results of these activities are reported twice a year to the TUM Scientific Council.

VI. FINAL PROVISIONS

28. The present Scientific Research Strategy for the period 2024-2027 was approved at the meeting of the Scientific Council of TUM on January 26, 2024 and validated at the Senate meeting on January 30, 2024.
29. This Strategy may be supplemented or amended by decision of the TUM Scientific Council and subsequently by vote of the TUM Senate.
30. This Strategy comes into force on the date of adoption by the Senate of the Technical University of Moldova.