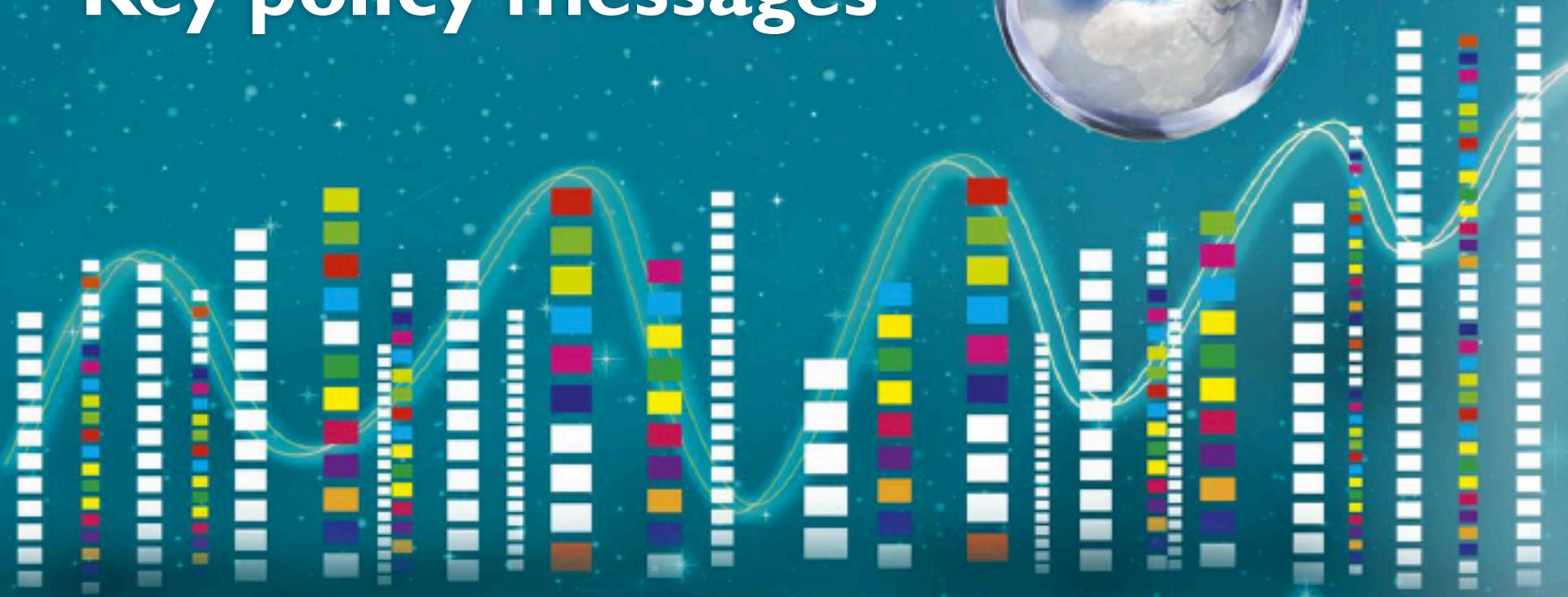




Peer Review of the Moldovan Research and Innovation System

under the Horizon 2020 Policy Support Facility

Key policy messages



Research and
Innovation

Feedback mission, Chisinau, 12 July 2016



PSF Peer review's context

- **PSF Peer Review** aimed at assisting and advising Moldova on R&I policy reforms
- **Strong commitment from the Moldovan authorities** to support this exercise and follow-up with concrete reforms
- **Organized** at the demand of the Moldovan Academy of Sciences to feed into:
 - The revision of the *Code of Science and Innovation*
 - The preparation of the *ERA national action plan*
- **Complex** political, economic and social situation during Peer Review period



“Four +” focus areas

- **Four focus areas** defined by the Moldovan authorities:
 - **Increasing the efficiency** of public R&I funding and the quality of the R&I performing bodies and instruments
 - **Improving the policies** for human resources and mobility of researchers
 - **Boosting business innovativeness** and science-business links
 - **Increasing R&I impact** by properly defining the policy instruments
- **Governance** recognized **as overarching issue** by the panel and all interviewed stakeholders

PSF Peer review's process (I)

- **PSF methodology** based on 3-steps (evidence, interviews, reporting)
- **Implemented** by a panel of 7 independent experts and peers from AT, EL, NL, PL, RO, EE
- **EC support to PSF panel** (facilitator, coordination, "infrastructural" support)
- **Extensive collection of evidence** and implementation phase based on the MD self assessment, background report, analysis of several national strategies and legal acts

PSF Peer review's process (2)

- **Interviews crucial for building complete picture of the system:** tens of meetings with 100s of stakeholders during 2 country visits;
- Extensive **consultations** with Moldovan authorities to fine-tune the recommendations and feed into the **current revision of the Moldovan R&I system**
- **Final Report** includes **7 crosscutting Policy Messages** supported by **24 detailed recommendations** with “best practice” case studies from peers and experts



Guiding principles

- **not create a risk** of diminishing the human and capital potential of the Moldovan R&I system
- **efficiency of public expenditures** in focus
 - lean and simple administrative structures and procedures
 - effective financial instruments
- **promote only science which is excellent or relevant** to scientific, social or economic priorities
- **transparency in all procedures is a must**, especially in terms of evaluation of proposals and institutions
- **promotion of an evaluation culture** should be at the heart of the reform

7 Key Policy Messages

Embed Research and Innovation (R&I) policy in the overall economic policy strategy of the country

- Improving synergies between Moldova's R&I strategy and the country's overall socio-economic ambitions is key. This cannot be reached without ambitious reforms of the national R&I system, strong and determined priority-setting, and continuous involvement of stakeholders in order to generate an ownership of these reforms.

Improve the governance of the national R&I system by strengthening the political responsibility for R&I with a dedicated Ministerial responsibility

- The panel is not convinced of the added value of the inter-ministerial Council for R&I announced by the government. We believe that the present coordination mechanisms at the level of the government combined also in the future with coordination at the level of the Board of the Agency for R&I, will be sufficient and therefore an added value for the proposed inter-ministerial Council for R&I is not evident.



7 Key Policy Messages

Create an independent, transparent and accountable R&I implementation Agency

- Agency should concentrate and allocate all available R&I funding on the basis of international standards. Ministerial responsibility for R&I policy-making with an independent Agency that manages R&I funds will allow the Moldovan Academy of Sciences to focus on its role as major research performer in the country.

Redress the binary research and education system

- Universities are still mostly concentrated on "teaching" and institutes on "research". The circulation of knowledge and human resources throughout the country's public system is now more essential than ever before. Incentives for cooperation between universities (where the young generation studies) and research institutes (with ageing research staff) should be a driving force of the reforms.

7 Key Policy Messages

Safeguard the public R&I capacity of Moldova

- Physical, intellectual and human capital of research institutions should be maintained and eventually reinforced. In return, systematic evaluation procedures for public research organizations and higher education institutions should be set up to progressively link public R&I funding to performance in the medium-term, thus rewarding quality research. The share of competitive funding allocated to R&I needs to be increased to stimulate competition.

Take resolute action to improve the employment and funding opportunities, working conditions and career perspectives of researchers

- Young and female scientific talents should be in focus. Open and merit-based recruitment practices and high-quality PhD programs are essential to modernize the system. Salaries, in particular for entry levels, should be revisited and scientific achievements should be rewarded.



7 Key Policy Messages

Urgently review the framework conditions for innovation by putting in place a coherent set of policy measures

- Create and stimulate a supportive environment for business engagement in R&I activities, including both non-financial tools (a legal environment supportive of spin-offs and knowledge transfer, better opportunities to fund risky projects) and the increased use of public funding to leverage business R&I activities.

Proposed reforms can only work in practice if they are accompanied by adequate funding.

The panel proposes that the country gradually increases its R&D intensity to reach the level of 2007 as quickly as possible from the current level 0,40%, which is considered an absolute minimum.

Last but not least ...

“Panel would like to emphasize that Moldova experiences a unique window of opportunity for smart reforms. These are eagerly expected by all stakeholders of the Moldovan R&I system [...]. The momentum should be reaped for tough and committed reforms. The country's intellectual and innovative capital should not be squandered since it is a source of growth. Applying cosmetic reforms might be a deadly cure for the Moldovan R&I system.”

*on behalf of the Panel
Krzysztof Gulda*