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DEVELOPMENT OF E-COMMERCE IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA IN THE CONTEXT OF ALIGNMENT WITH GLOBAL PRACTICES

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Abstract: Electronic commerce has become one of the fastest-growing sectors of the global economy, reshaping business models, consumer behaviour, and financial systems worldwide. The article examines the evolution of electronic commerce in the Republic of Moldova and its alignment with global digital transformation trends. It highlights the growing role of e-commerce as a catalyst for financial inclusion, technological progress, and economic modernization. The research analyzes the dynamics of online sales, the expansion of non-cash payments, and the diversification of internet platforms that facilitate electronic transactions. Special attention is given to the development of payment infrastructure, consumer behaviour, and the digitalization of financial services. The study also identifies structural and infrastructural challenges that continue to limit market efficiency, including logistics, cyber security, and uneven digital access. The findings demonstrate that the expansion of cashless payments and online platforms significantly contributes to Moldova's digital competitiveness and integration into the global digital economy.

Introduction

The rapid development of the digital environment has led to the emergence of a new type of economic activity-e-commerce, which has become an essential factor of the global digital transformation.

The integration of e-commerce into entrepreneurial activity facilitates access to markets, optimizes costs and stimulates economic competitiveness[15]. At the same time, digitalization acts as a catalyst for innovation and the transition to sustainable business models, contributing to the development of the circular economy.

The expansion of the Internet, the digitalization of services and changes in consumer behaviour have accelerated the integration of online transactions into the global economy, transforming e-commerce into a fundamental component of the technology-based economy.

For the Republic of Moldova, e-commerce has a strategic role in the digital transformation process. Infrastructure development, increased use of electronic payments and adaptation of the entrepreneurial environment contribute significantly to the modernization of the economy and the strengthening of regional competitiveness.

In the current context of the transition to the digital economy, the adoption of digital technologies becomes an essential condition for reducing economic disparities and strengthening national resilience.

The purpose of this research is to highlight the role of e-commerce in the digital transformation of the economy of the Republic of Moldova, with the objectives of analyzing global and local trends, assessing the link between digitalization and sustainability, as well as identifying factors that stimulate the adoption of e-commerce.

Material and method

The study is based on an analysis of the dynamics and structure of the e-commerce market in the Republic of Moldova for the period 2018–2023, comparing national and global trends. Recent studies highlight the constant growth of global investments in digital transformation technologies and services, which between 2017–2021 increased from 0.96 to 1.59 trillion USD, and forecasts indicate that by 2026 these expenditures will reach 3.4 trillion USD, more than twice the level in 2021.

The methodological approach is based on a comprehensive statistical and comparative analysis. The data is aggregated chronologically and presented using graphical models (line and bar charts, pie charts, and comparative graphs), allowing for the visualization of e-commerce market growth dynamics in Moldova and globally, market structure (share of goods and services), electronic payment penetration, consumer behavioural differences.

At the same time, in the Republic of Moldova, the digitalization of the business environment contributes to strengthening competitiveness and creating a more efficient and sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystem.

All values were converted to a single currency (euro) and standardized by year for comparability. The analysis was conducted in stages: identification of macro trends (global context), analysis of data for the Republic of Moldova, interpretation of the relationships between digitalization, payment infrastructure, and consumer behaviour.



Results and discussions

In the context of rapid digital transformation, global e-commerce has become a defining force reshaping trade structures, consumer behaviour, and market competitiveness, driving unprecedented growth across both developed and emerging economies. The Internet has already begun to drive major changes in business practices globally, demonstrating its potential to transform economic operations on a global scale.

The analysis of global and national e-commerce trends confirms that digitalization has become a fundamental driver of economic modernization and competitiveness. The Republic of Moldova, although still in an early development stage, is demonstrating consistent progress, supported by growing trust in online transactions and continuous improvement of digital infrastructure.

Strengthening cyber security, promoting financial inclusion, and expanding digital literacy remain essential priorities for sustaining this upward trajectory and ensuring the long-term integration of Moldovan e-commerce into the global digital economy.

Conclusions

The conducted research confirms that e-commerce has become a key catalyst for Moldova's integration into the global digital economy, transforming both business models and consumer behaviour.

The analysis of global and national trends demonstrates that digital transformation is no longer a peripheral process but a central mechanism of economic modernization and competitiveness.

The Republic of Moldova, despite structural and infrastructural constraints, shows steady progress through the expansion of cashless payments, the diversification of online platforms, and the growing adoption of digital financial services.

The findings highlight that further progress requires an integrated strategy involving public institutions, financial intermediaries, and private companies to strengthen consumer confidence, enhance cyber security, and encourage small and medium-sized enterprises to adopt digital tools.

Investment in artificial intelligence, data analytics, and automation will be essential for improving the efficiency and competitiveness of Moldovan e-commerce in the regional and international context.

E-commerce in the Republic of Moldova is evolving from an emerging trend into a consolidated sector of the digital economy. Sustaining this momentum depends on fostering innovation, expanding digital inclusion, and aligning national regulatory and technological frameworks with European and global standards.

Through these coordinated efforts, Moldova can position itself as a competitive participant in the digital transformation of the global marketplace.