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**ENSURING THE COMPETITIVENESS OF THE  
PUBLIC CATERING ENTERPRISES  
(case of the Republic of Moldova)**

**SPECIALTY 521.03 - ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT  
IN THE FIELD OF ACTIVITY**

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### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ÎMM - small and medium enterprises  
PC – public catering  
PCF– public catering facilities

## CONCEPTUAL GUIDELINES OF RESEARCH

**Relevance and importance of the problem addressed.** In the current conditions, competition is a real generator of economic performance and competitiveness, a key factor of success in the competitive struggle. Both the competitiveness of the public catering sector and the public catering sector in general is a field little explored in the research of scientists, especially the local ones, but which has an increasing economic and social importance for the national economy. The relevance of the food sector increases due to the fact that the activity can be carried out both independently and as a component of the tourist service. Food plays a predominant role for the tourism industry. For many tourists, gastronomy is a basic element in the selection of tourist destinations, and the tourist product whose main motivation is gastronomy has generated a form of vacation known as "gastronomic vacation". The increased role of the public catering was also due to some peculiarities of the contemporary life, such as the increase of the urbanization degree, the changes produced in the consumption habits of the population, the intensification of the population mobility, the increase of the tourist travels, etc.

On the bases of the success of any business, including in the field of nutrition, are the sustainable competitive advantages of goods and services, which the consumer understands as specific properties and differentiates them from others. In this context, competitiveness can be perceived as a relative and integral feature that reflects the difference between a service or product of the company and the services / products of competitors and determines its attractiveness in the consumer's vision.

The importance and relevance of the topic we set out to research in the thesis is growing due to the acceleration of environmental changes; the emergence of new requirements from consumers, as well as the change of their attitudes; increasing competition for resources; business internationalization; the emergence of new business opportunities, often absolutely unexpected; the development of information networks, which make it possible to disseminate and receive information immediately; wide availability of modern technologies; changing the role of human resources in the organization, as well as other factors. Obviously, all these aspects also influence the food sector, and the competitive struggle between different units of this sector is more and more fierce.

**Degree of problem's study.** In the doctoral thesis, the research is focused on the competitiveness of public catering companies. The analysis of the situation in the field of research shows that at the international level, the

approach to competitiveness has been the subject of valuable studies and papers by scientists Abramovitz M., Arron K, Chenery H., Denison E., Grossman G., Helpman E., Hume D., Kuznets S., Lucas R., Romer P., Solow R., Ricardo D., Haberler G., Stolper W., Rybczynski T., Samuelson P., Norman V., Krugman P., etc.. Michael Porter laid the basis of the theory of competitive advantage in 1990, with the publication of the paper *The Competitive Advantages of the Nations*.

The issue of competitiveness is at the center of attention of scientists from the Republic of Moldova. Thus we mention the research carried out by the academician Belostecinic G., Professor Feuraș E.. Competitiveness is approached under different aspects in several doctor and habilitated doctor theses.

The economic aspects of the research of the public catering is more modestly present in the research of local scientists. We mention the research of I. Maleca, who promoted some solutions and recommendations regarding the improvement of the accounting of the main operations in the activity of the public catering facilities. Improving the restaurant management system is the field of scientific interest of the researcher R. Negru, who in her works analysed the specifics of the restaurant management system, determined the potential of restaurant services in the Republic of Moldova. Another research addresses the efficiency of SME's activity in public catering. Researcher N. Luca has developed some measures and activities to streamline enterprises in the food sector in the Republic of Moldova. The marketing aspect of the public catering field was researched by the scientists Petrovici S. and Tăzlăvan D. However, in these scientific preoccupations we did not find any research on the competitiveness of the public catering enterprises.

Assessing the importance of developments in the field of competitiveness, as well as in the field of public catering, it is necessary to mention that, so far, no complex research has been carried out, dedicated to the systemic and complex analysis of the competitiveness of the food sector. Starting from the importance of the research field and its insufficient approach in the scientists' research, we consider that the scientific approach advanced by us is an important and necessary one to be investigated.

**The aim of the paper** is to develop theoretical and methodological approaches to ensure the competitiveness of the public catering enterprises.

The advanced aim determined the need to achieve the following **objectives:**

- ✓ To conceptualize the public catering service as a distinct segment of the market economy;

- ✓ To highlight the role and economic importance of the food sector as a separate economic activity, associated with the production and sale of culinary products and leisure activities;
- ✓ To outline the current state of knowledge in the field of competitiveness of public catering enterprises;
- ✓ To identify the factors influencing the competitiveness of public catering enterprises;
- ✓ To analyse the economic situation of the public catering sector in the Republic of Moldova and of the public catering market in Chisinau;
- ✓ To conduct a survey among managers, consumers and employees in order to identify how public catering companies pursue the development of competitiveness and the importance it has in the development of enterprises;
- ✓ To develop the solutions to ensure the competitiveness of public catering units in the Republic of Moldova;
- ✓ To validate the conceptual management approaches of the staff competitiveness of the public catering organization in the context of implementing the competency-based approach;
- ✓ To determine the optimal location for a PCF in Chisinau based on the development of a mathematical model.

In advancing the research hypothesis, we started from what exists in the field of scientific theory, regarding the competitiveness of the public catering facilities. On this basis, we developed questionnaires addressed to managers, employees in this field, but also to consumers of those services in order to highlight those factors, which to a greater extent influence its competitiveness. In this sense, the following hypotheses have been developed:

One hypothesis is the assumption that among the factors that ensure the competitiveness of PCF a very great importance is given to qualification and skills of employees;

Another hypothesis assumes that among the important factors with a positive influence on the competitiveness of the PCF is also the geographical location of the premises, related to its kind.

**The scientific novelty of the results obtained** is transposed into the following:

- Systematization of the approaches regarding the definition of the “service” concept and highlighting a classification of them, according to the components of the service;

- Classification of the public catering services according to the model of Maslow's pyramid, based on levels, which include the distinctive elements of public catering services, related to consumption, security, social affiliation, status and self-affirmation;
- Realization of the theoretical study on the comparative analysis of the types of public catering units in Moldova, Romania, Russia, France;
- Demonstration of the concept of “competitiveness of the public catering enterprise”, highlighting its basic components;
- Identification of the factors influencing the competitiveness of public catering enterprises and developing solutions to ensure their competitiveness;
- Adaptation of the identification model of the optimal location for a new public catering unit and elaboration of its algorithm;
- Development of the professional competencies model of public catering specialists, aimed at increasing labour flexibility.

**The solved scientific problem** consists in the theoretical and methodological substantiation of the factors influencing the activity of public catering units, which confirmed the need for continuous development of professional skills of employees and the opportunity to develop a methodology for identifying the optimal location of a public catering facility depending on its type, in order to ensure the competitiveness of the public catering facilities.

**The theoretical significance of the thesis** consists in the contributions to the notions of service, public catering service, competitiveness of public catering enterprises, identification of factors influencing their competitiveness, highlighting the criteria for assessing the competitiveness of PCFs, comparative examination of types of PCFs in different countries, completing the model for identifying the optimal location of the PCF, developing the model of professional skills of public catering specialists, aimed at increasing labour flexibility. In this way, the research contributes to the development of the theory of competitiveness of PCFs.

**The applied value** of the paper is determined by the possibility to use the basic results of the thesis to streamline the activity of public catering facilities. In addition, these research results can serve as a basis for further, deeper research on the factors that influence the competitiveness of PCF.

**The results of the scientific research of the thesis** were communicated, discussed and published in 11 international scientific

conferences, both in the country and abroad, were presented in 3 articles published in scientific journals. Participation in scientific conferences with communications in the field analysed in the thesis, publication of scientific articles has favoured and facilitated the transfer of knowledge to other researchers in the field.

**Implementation of scientific results.** The scientific results obtained were applied in the teaching process at the Department of "Trade, Tourism and Public Nutrition" of the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, in the instructional process of students. Some recommendations regarding the implementation of the flexible work remuneration system, based on the evaluation of the competitiveness parameters based on the competencies of the chefs and waiters were implemented within the "Harap Alb" LLC.

**Research methodology:** In order to achieve the purpose of research and validation of hypotheses we used the following methods: theoretical methods: scientific documentation, theoretical modelling, comparison, interpretation, analysis, synthesis, generalization, abstraction, logic, statistics; praxiological methods: logical-graphic method of structuring the contents, testing, questionnaire, expert method, statistical-mathematical processing of experimental data.

**Keywords:** competitiveness, competition, public catering facility, service, public catering service, competence.

## THESIS CONTENT

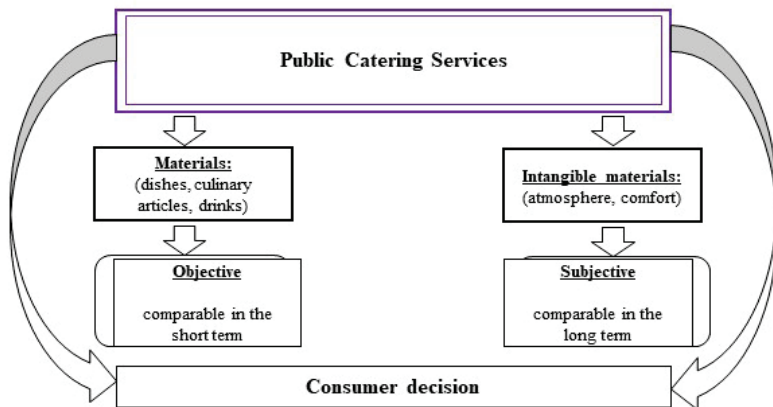
The **Introduction** argues the relevance and importance of the research topic, highlights the purpose and objectives of the thesis, shows the novelty and scientific originality of the results obtained, justifies the applicative value of the thesis.

The first chapter presents the scientific research in the fields covered by the thesis on the competitiveness of public catering companies. Entitled "**Theoretical approaches to public catering and basic elements of its competitiveness**", this chapter contributes to the achievement of the thesis' objectives by analysing various theories with reference to the concept of "service", "public catering", highlighting common points and divergences in this regard. By confronting several criteria for classification of the public catering services, the author comes up with the argument of his own vision.

Most definitions, studied in the works of domestic and foreign authors, state one or more characteristics of services, which differentiate them from tangible products, some emphasizing utilities, advantages or satisfactions produced by service activities, others - the changes caused by them on goods, persons or social relations. At the same time, public catering



services differ from other services, as they can be both tangible (materials: culinary preparations and articles, beverages, culinary semi-preparations) and intangible (intangible, related to the quality of customer service: ambience, comfort) (Figure 1).



**Fig. 1. The essence of public catering services**

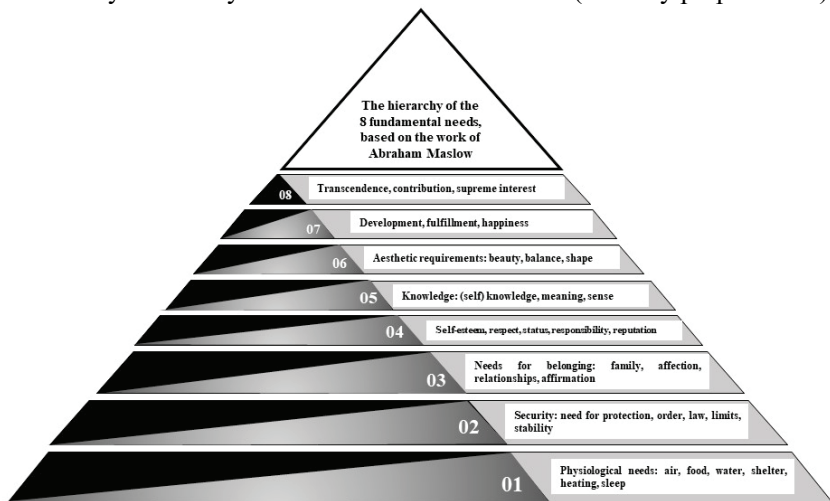
*Source:* adapted by the author

All of the above mentioned allows us to divide catering services into the following:

- food services;
- culinary production services;
- services for organization of the culinary products and customer service consumption;
- services for the sale of purchased culinary and food products;
- services for leisure activities, including entertainment;
- information and counselling services (consultancy);
- complementary services.

The definitions of the PC service provided by the literature in the economic field can serve as a basis for assessing the impact of economic benefits, which are considered services by themselves, on the competitiveness of enterprises in the sector. Studying different approaches to catering, but also to different types of classifications, allowed us to propose the ordering of catering according to the model of Maslow's pyramid, based on levels, which include the distinctive elements of catering, related to consumption, safety, social belonging, status and self-affirmation (Figure 2).

PC services meet the physiological needs of the population and are assigned to consumer services, along with the services of other sectors (public services, health, etc.), which is characterized by a low degree of distinctive properties: *intangibility*, refers to the fact that they cannot be seen, tasted, felt, smelled, before benefiting from them; *inseparability*, refers to the fact that the service is characterized by a close interaction between the provider and the customer, who participates directly in the service process; *impermanence (variability)*, refers to the fact that the quality of the same type of service varies quite a lot, depending on who offers them, when and where; *perishability*, consists in the impossibility of being stored; this feature is overcome by the ability to store the result of services (culinary preparations).



**Fig. 2. The distinctive properties of public catering services approached through the model of Maslow's pyramid**

*Source:* elaborated after: [2]

The category of safety and security services, in our opinion, could include goods, security and personal protection services (especially food safety, consumer protection), along with insurance services, legal services, public order, public administration, improving or maintaining health, which is characterized by an average degree of distinctive features. The category of social services designed to meet the needs of belonging, love and other positive emotional experiences, would include PC services that offer in themselves experiences, aesthetic and flavour memories, and which, above all, have the potential to create added value to contiguous areas, e.g., food-

drink-tourism, being differentiated to a greater extent and intended, as a rule, for small groups of consumers.

The category of "respectful" services would include a variety of services designed to ensure consumer status (VIP-service), for example, restaurant services, which have distinctive features, and are usually unique and very expensive. The category of self-affirmation services, in our opinion, would include PC services along with educational and others that ensure the development of human personality, which are characterized by the highest degree of intangibility, inseparability from the source, as well as perishability and variability.

The PC field has various definitions depending on the country, without currently using a single classification of businesses in the PC sector. In this context, in the first chapter of the doctoral thesis were studied the types of PCF in the Republic of Moldova, Russia, Romania, France, performed a comparative analysis and presented some generalizations and conclusions. Thus, analysing the essence of different types of catering units, we defined the catering service as a separate economic activity, associated with the production and sale of culinary products and leisure activities, part of the food distribution circuit, organized to ensure access to food from producer to consumer and which aims to increase food consumption outside the household (home) and retail.

In this chapter, we mention the research of the current state of knowledge in the field of competitiveness of public catering enterprises, as well as the identification of the influencing factors of the competitiveness of these enterprises. The research carried out in this chapter allowed us to conclude that the public catering companies, having some peculiarities, at the same time, conceptually do not differ from other enterprises in the national economy. In this context, we believe that the *competitiveness of the public catering enterprise* represents the capacity of the enterprise to produce culinary preparations and beverages that correspond to the culinary preferences of consumers, to organize consumption and to provide entertainment services, high quality conviviality and affordable prices, to meet the needs of consumers, better than competitors, and for which consumers are willing to pay more than for products offered by competitors, thereby ensuring the basic purpose of the company - maximizing profit, productivity being considered the main indicator of success or failure.

The research of the factors influencing the competitiveness of the public catering enterprises in general determined the necessity of their study at the level of economic facilities, and then, through the particularities of the public catering service, the identification of the factors for this types of enterprises. Currently, the basic condition for the competitiveness of the PC

enterprise is the ability to identify environmental changes and changes within the company and adjust its competitiveness parameters, forecast culinary preferences, to adapt as quickly as possible to them for prompt elaboration of the company's competitive strategy. All the tools can be used to ensure the competitiveness of the existing PCFs, the most efficient being the management, based on the competence approach of the staff and the orientation towards the client.

Chapter II **"Analysis of the situation on the market of public catering companies"** argues the role and economic importance of the food sector as a separate economic activity, associated with the production and sale of products and leisure activities. This chapter, being an analytical one, performs an analysis of the economic situation in the public catering sector and presents the analysis of the public catering sector in Chisinau.

The distinctive feature of the current PC market is the inhomogeneity and multilateral coverage of various categories of consumers: by income level, age, sex, social status, interests. The PC services market addresses the applicants with individualized preferences for food and drinks, the provision of services being ensured by independent economic units with specific functions (restaurants, confectioneries, cafes, bars, etc.), as well as by units with similar profiles belonging to hotel commercial enterprises or other independent commercial food structures, satisfying the most diverse needs - from the basic one - to satisfy hunger and thirst to various appetites for image and demonstration of social status.

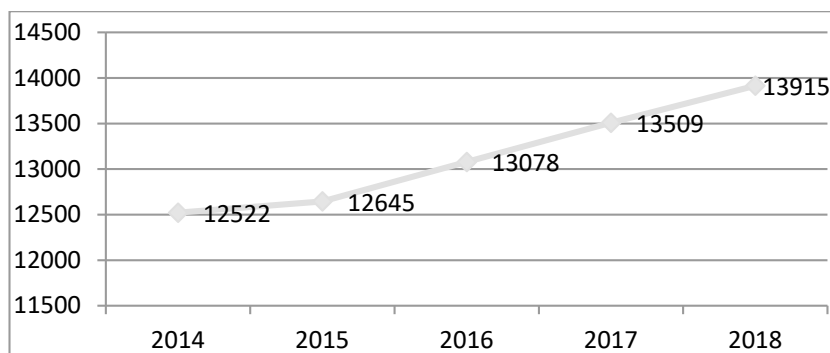
Based on the information provided by the National Bureau of Statistics, we performed an analysis of the situation in the field of public catering in the Republic of Moldova for the years 2013-2018. One of the general indicators is the number of units providing PC services. Thus, we mention an increase by 17.2% of public catering enterprises in the period 2013-2018. The increased interest in the last years towards this field will undergo essential changes immediately after the end of the pandemic with COVID 19, some units will go bankrupt, and others will need a longer period for restarting the activity.

During the analysed period, the increase of the number of enterprises in the field of public catering was due to the growth of micro enterprises, but also of small ones, so those with a staff of up to 49. As a share, during these years we also observe a certain increase namely of these types of enterprises. The number of large enterprises in this field has stabilized at 2 units, and the medium ones - at 28.

In 2018, 14.4 thousand employees were active in the accommodation and public catering sector, which constitutes 2.1% of the total economic

sectors. If we analyse the distribution of employees by type of units according to their size, the largest share of employees is in small enterprises: from 39.5% in 2014 to 37.3% in 2018, this being followed by micro enterprises. This can be explained by the fact that the number of large public catering companies is very small. In addition, many PCFs are small, requiring a smaller volume of financial resources, being more flexible, adapting more easily to changes in the external environment.

The evolution of employees in the PC sector for the analysed period is a well-defined one and growing. (Fig.3).



**Fig. 3. Evolution of the number of employees in the PC sector**

*Source:* [7]

At the same time, the mobility of employees in the PC sector is sufficiently high. In 2018, the number of people employed in accommodation and public catering activities (8071 people) is almost equal to the number of people released during the year (7711 people). It is the same situation as in other sectors of the national economy. What is worse, we consider the fact that almost half of the staff (46%) was "in transit" within the PCFs. Obviously, this does not allow for a well-trained staff to be employed. The situation does not differ much in other years from that of the year 2018. In order for employees to work efficiently in the company, it is necessary to create favourable conditions for work and to ensure a competitive salary. Analysing the evolution of this indicator we can mention a very low level of gross monthly earnings in the public catering sector. The salary is very low both in absolute terms and compared to the average for all economic activities, but also for the group "accommodation and public catering activities". Even if its growth in the analysed period (76.8%) exceeds the level of growth on all economic activities (70.6%), the size is too small to stimulate

an efficient activity. However, the number of vacancies in the sector is not so high, even compared to the other sectors.

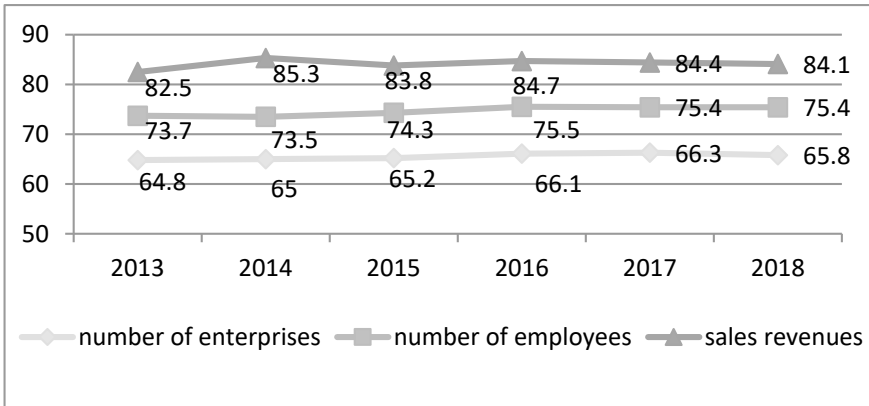
Although the value of the PC market has increased significantly in recent years, the Republic of Moldova is well below the European average in terms of food expenditures for the population in out-of-home locations. The main factor in the development of the PC market is considered the income of the population, the level of which generates qualitative changes in demand. The statistical data, analysed in the thesis shows that the expenditures of the population of the Republic of Moldova for public catering services are quite low and in the year 2018 amounted to -1.9%, increasing by 0.1 pp compared to 2017. For comparison, Romanian households allocated in 2018 - 1.9% of their total consumption expenditures for services provided by restaurants, cafes, bars and teahouses, the lowest percentage among European Union member states.

The improvement of the public catering sector also targets its commercial component. In this direction, there is the modernization of the commercial network from the structural point of view and of the distribution to the consumer, as well as the diversification of the forms of service. Thus, regarding the structure of the network, there is a tendency to open some units with complex functions, which meet more varied requirements such as, for example, satisfying the need for food, as well as those of entertainment and conviviality. The new types of units - confectioneries, pretzels, bistros - are aimed at certain customer segments, as well as changes in the forms of marketing, used in public catering. The network of self-service and "fast food" units is rapidly expanding, characterized by the possibility of fast serving. The "fast food" system, very widespread today in the world, usually offers a limited assortment but at affordable prices, achieved through high customer rotation speed and medium comfort. Along with the modernization of the forms of marketing and service, there is also the diversification of the complementary services according to the beneficiaries.

These transformations ensure the increased participation of public catering in meeting the needs of consumers and increasing its economic and social role. Under these conditions, the main factors for the expansion of the PC market could be: the continuous increase of the population's income; involvement of the educational factor for changing the food culture and lifestyle of the population towards one with higher consumption of public catering services; the emergence of assorted innovations in culinary preparations and beverages, as well as technical and technological ones, in particular, the automation of processes or technological operations, which

would save human resources, reduce the production cycle, minimize the level of uncertainty and risk in business.

We focused our research on the competitiveness of public catering units on those PCFs, which operate in Chisinau. In favour of this election we will bring the following arguments: on January 1, 2018 in Chisinau live 23.3% [8] of the entire population of the Republic of Moldova, work 57.4% of all economic agents in the country, the average monthly salary of an employee is 112.9% compared to the average salary in the country, 86.2% are located from higher education institutions. We also mention that in Chisinau are located the most accommodation and public catering units with the largest number of employees in this field. From Figure 4 we notice that the number of accommodation and catering units in Chisinau in 2018 was 65.8% of the total per republic, with constant trends to increase this share since 2013.



**Fig. 4. Share (in %) of some indicators that characterize the accommodation and public catering sector in Chisinau vs. total by country**

*Source:* calculated by the author on the basis of: [7]

The public catering facilities from Chisinau are located in all sectors of the city. On 01.01.2019, we find the most PCFs located in the Center sector - 478 units, followed by the Rascani sector with 475 units, Botany with 428 units, Buiucani with 362 units and Ciocana with 233 units. The least PCFs are located in the Ciocana sector of the city. This can be explained by the fact that until recently this sector was an industrial one, with companies having canteens. However, in recent years this sector has developed rapidly, with many homes being put into operation. The infrastructure is also developing, but with lower rates.

Following the analysis of the current state-of-the-art, we can find an unfavourable situation in terms of many factors with a strong influence on the competitiveness of public catering enterprises in the Republic of Moldova, such as: lack of highly qualified specialists, increased mobility of employees, small number of employees vocational trainings, the use of outdated technologies and equipment that reduce productivity, the absence of specific financing instruments, guarantee schemes, supporting market access in the perspective of increasing competition, through extremely limited access to new technologies, etc.

Chapter III **"Directions to ensure and increase the competitiveness of public catering enterprises"** is based on the presentation of empirical research, conducted within the PCFs in Chisinau. The study aims to develop scientific research in order to identify how public catering enterprises pursue the development of competitiveness and the importance it has in the development of the enterprises. We applied the survey in order to carry out the mentioned study. In order to determine the sample to be researched and to highlight the aspects related to the competitiveness of public catering enterprises in Chisinau, were used non-random methods, based on reasoning.

Three questionnaires were developed, each being intended for a certain category of respondents. Thus, a questionnaire was developed in order to be applied to managers of public catering companies in order to identify the vision of managers on the level of competitiveness of the companies they run, highlighting the main problems they face. The second questionnaire was addressed to employees of public catering companies. The need to develop and apply this questionnaire was determined by the answers provided by the managers, noting that the lack of qualified staff is a serious problem for PCFs. At the same time, in Chapter I we mentioned that the qualification of human resources is a key factor that determines the competitiveness of PCFs. The purpose of this questionnaire was to identify those problems that occur in the food sector and that are directly related to the human factor

The third questionnaire is addressed to consumers of public catering services. Its purpose was to highlight the consumers' vision on the problems in the sector, the evaluation criteria of the PCFs, the identification of specific aspects, factors that have a real impact on the competitiveness of a food company.

All questionnaires were completed online, being distributed according to the addressee. Thus, our requests were answered by 117 PCFs' managers, 202 employees of different catering structures and 209 customers of different types of PCFs.

The competitiveness of economic structures in the field of public catering is influenced by several internal and external factors, but the key role belongs to



human capital. In the context of this statement, we conducted research, which highlights the impact of employees' professional skills on the competitiveness of economic structures in the food sector and developed the methodology for assessing the level of competence of employees in the field of food. The analysis performed by us allowed to determine the inhomogeneous composition of the parameters that form the competitiveness level of employees and the consequences of implementing the skills approach in public catering enterprises.

As we saw in Chapter II, most PCFs in the Republic of Moldova are micro (82.7%) and small (15.5%) by size. Obviously, specialists in several fields, such as human resources, economists, technologists, lawyers, etc., cannot be employed in such units. Therefore, the specialists in these units must be flexible and have skills specific to several positions. In this context, we aimed to develop a model of professional skills of specialists (Table 1), aimed at increasing workforce flexibility based on a cumulative matrix of professional skills of 3 types, including basic, related and additional, in 3 levels of complexity and with the conventional delimitation of competencies, according to the principle of individual priorities in the assimilation of functional competencies related to a certain functional-competency category of employees. The matrix allows the design and monitoring of the individual path of training and development of skills and, thus, the rational management of the workforce of the enterprise based on the degree of training of workers' skills for each area of functional activity.

**Table 1. The matrix of the professional competencies of specialists' model**

Competences	Complexity level		
	lower	medium	high
Basic	CBI ↓ →	CBM ↓ →	CBS ↓ ↓
Related	CCI ↓ ↓ →	CCM ↓ ↓ →	CCS ↓ ↓ ↓
Additional	CSI ↓ →	CSM ↓ →	CSS ↓ ↓ ↓

*Source:* elaborated by the author

The development of the employee's level of competence training can be ensured in two ways: vertically, when the basic, related and additional competencies are assimilated successively, and horizontally, when the competencies are assimilated at the lower, medium, higher complexity level.

Based on the model presented, was developed the methodology for assessing the competence level of employees of the public catering enterprises, which includes the diagnostic model in terms of identifying functional flexibility and identifying the professional development of the specialist and competitiveness based on skills.

For the purpose of this methodology, we identified three levels of competitiveness: upper, middle and lower. The employee's competencies are achieved through a combination of competitive skills, which are specific to each group of competencies (e.g. learning skills, strategic, self-knowledge and achievement, ethical, moral, etc.). When the employee's skills are in accordance with those in the job description for each position separately (manager, technologist, chef, snack chef, grilled chef, waiter, bartender, etc.) and meet almost entirely the requirements of production, it means that the employee possesses a higher level of competitiveness. The average level of competency-based competitiveness is usually specific to specialists who only partially meet competency-based competitiveness requirements and, according to self-assessment results, have less confidence in job stability both within and outside the enterprise. The lower level of skill's competitiveness is typical for specialists who have an unacceptably low level of development compared to that required for one or more characteristics at the same time. These employees are the first candidates for being dismissed, they are characterized by extremely pessimistic forecasts about their employment prospects. The developed methodology involves the following stages [3]:

**Stage 1.** Identification of the basic competitiveness specification based on competencies and their adjustment using the expert method, which was applied to the managers of the PCFs.

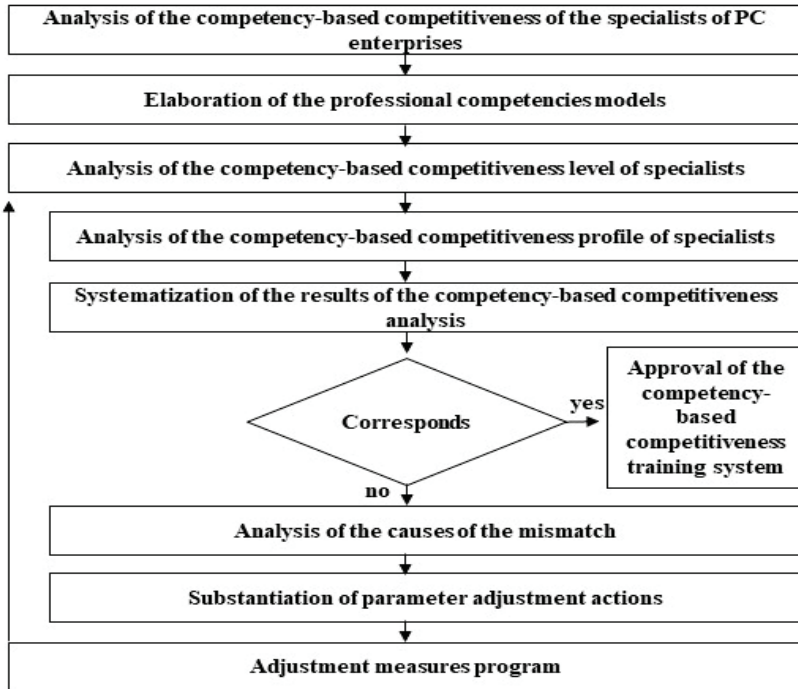
**Stage 2.** Calculation of the general level of training of experts' professional skills as the sum of the professional competence levels of the adjusted group.

**Stage 3.** Evaluation of the work experience and professional training of the worker, calculation of the level of competitiveness based on the skills of the specialist as the sum of the parameter's share and the value.

The model of the procedures for diagnosing and managing the competitiveness based on the competencies of the specialists from PCFs is presented in the fig.5.

Operational, strategic or additional recommendations on enhancing the competency-based competitiveness of the company's staff are developed in accordance with the adjustment measures. These are related to the system of training and material stimulation, on one hand, and to the system of career planning of specialists, on the other hand. In this sense, in the research we

proposed changes in the salary fund formation system, based on the parameters of the level of skills formed by specialists and the methodology of intensifying the salary stimulating function of the company’s staff, based on the concept of flexible work remuneration systems.



**Fig. 5. Competence diagnosis and management model based on the competencies of enterprise specialists in the field of PC**

*Source:* adopted after [5]

In the context of the research, we proposed the algorithm for evaluating the level of professional development of specialists, based on its interdependence and the level of competitiveness based on the skills of employees. It can be used by the company in the process of strategic planning and determines the efficiency of the management of knowledge, skills, personnel skills, having an impact on the economic evolution of the company. In our study, we emerged from 3 development stages of competitiveness based on the specialists’ skills (Table 2): training, advancement, improvement and levels of competitiveness based on skills and related professional development.

**Table 2. Identification of the professional development stage**

Development stages	The range of the professional development level	Competency-based competitiveness level
Formation (F)	0,20 - 0,49	Initial (I)
Advancement (A)	0,50 - 0,79	Medium (M)
Improvement (I)	0,80 - 1,00	Raised (R)

*Source:* adopted after [5]

Professional competencies model of specialists for public catering fields, proposed in terms of research presentation, aimed at increasing flexibility for work and allows the achievement of superior performance indicators, in particular, increasing the share of workers with related and additional skills, increasing the level of satisfaction in professional activity and implementing changes in the remuneration system.

The research also confirmed the need to develop a methodology for assessing the competitiveness of PCFs. In this order of ideas, we consider important to have as a starting point certain activities (principles), which determine the particularities of the PCF, the consideration of which will allow us to increase the accuracy of the evaluation. We consider the evaluation of the *PCFs important*. The evaluation can be performed, based on different indicators (quantitative and qualitative), as well as under different aspects (financial, technical, etc.). The activity of public catering companies is meaningless without its consumers. In this case, we consider it appropriate to carry out the evaluation of the PCFs specifically from the consumer's point of view, i.e. within the evaluation of the consumer service. The PCF has the following basic methods of ensuring sustainable competitive advantages: [6] Increasing consumer loyalty; Successful location of the enterprise; Ensuring partnerships with suppliers; Introduction of management information systems; Cost reduction.

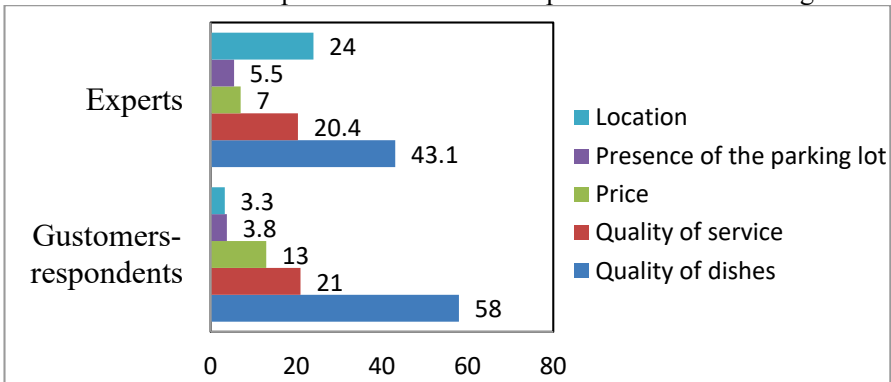
The first two are considered the most acceptable for evaluation.

Another important moment in this regard is the *development of the set of criteria for assessing the competitiveness of the company*. This criteria must include, first of all, the qualitative characteristics, which determine the essence of the service in question, but also some that go beyond these requirements, which are part of the additional services offered by the company, such as the existence of the parking lot etc. The 58.0% of consumers who participated in the survey consider: the quality of the preparations is a key indicator for the evaluation of a PC enterprise. The quality of services is important for a PCF in the opinion of

19.0% of respondents. In addition, here, we attribute another 1.9%, which mentioned the quality of service being an important one for the evaluation of PCF. It should be noted that the perception of quality, whether it is the quality of the food or the quality of the service, is relative to the consumer. His reaction is based on the sensory properties, mostly known only to him. A product is made because there is demand for it, and a food product will have as many quality variants as it tastes, each will represent an evaluation "suitable for consumption" and therefore a certain level of quality. The quality of culinary products is often related to the expected requirements based on past experiences.

Another important criterion in the respondents' view is the price of the food or services as a whole. This indicated 13.4% of respondents. In our view, customers are aware that a quality product cannot be cheap, so by requesting quality, the price is less important. Customers consider it important to determine the competitiveness of PCF and other criteria, such as the presence of parking spaces (3.8%). If the consumer has nowhere to park the car, he will obviously not be able to enter the premises and will look for another one. The location of the food unit is also important (3.3%), especially if we are talking about people who study or work and the lunch break is short. Of course, location is important in other situations as well. The modern attitude towards business represents for entrepreneurs the task of choosing not the concept of a PCF from a certain location, but the location of the unit for the development of a certain concept.

At the same time, we turned to the opinion of experts, to see how they perceive the important factors of competitiveness. The arrangement of these factors in the view of experts and customers - respondents is shown in Figure 6.



**Fig. 6. Arrangement of the competitiveness factors of PCFs in the vision of experts and clients**

Thus, the opinion of the experts corresponds to that of the customers - respondents (with some deviations), in terms of factors: quality of service (deviation - 0.6%), factors "price of service" experts are of the opinion that its importance is lower by 6%, and the "quality of the preparations" by 14.9% lower than the appreciation of the respective factors by the clients - respondents. The experts' view on the importance of the "location" factor is totally different from that of the clients, who attribute 24% compared to 3.3% assigned by the clients - respondents. We agree to the opinion of the experts and consider that the geographical location of the company is an important factor of the competitiveness.

Considering the location of the PCFs as an important factor of its competitiveness, we aimed to determine the types of PCFs and its location in the Ciocana sector of Chisinau city. The lowest number of PCFs is registered in this sector, indicated above. For this purpose, we took as a basis the methodology proposed by the researcher from the Russian Federation, Kotelnikova A. [4]. At the same time, applying this methodology we identified a number of inaccuracies. Therefore, during the respective calculations, we adapted some elements.

In order to shape the optimal location of the power food facility of a certain type, it is necessary to determine the function of the demand depending on the location of the facility and to identify the most important factors regarding the location of the PCF. We divided these factors into the following groups:

1. The distances (S) to nearby businesses whose employees are potential customers, as well as to the blocks of flats where people who may also be potential customers live. Distances S must not exceed 20 minutes of walking or 1500 meters. The dependence of the demand function on this factor will be considered as a descending quadratic as the distance increases,  $n$  is the number of buildings in which different enterprises are located, as well as residential blocks, where potential customers may be.

2. Number of employees at each of the nearby enterprises  $P1 \dots Pn$ . The dependence of the demand function will be considered linear, directly proportional to the number of employees at the enterprises.

3. Number of tenants in residential blocks  $L1 \dots Ln$ . The dependence of the demand function will be considered linear, directly proportional to the number of tenants in each residential block.

4. Serviceability of competing enterprises. For the calculation G is applied the formula

$$G=c*\sum PG_i, \tag{1}$$

where  $G_i$  represents the service capacity of the competing enterprise  $i$ ,  $PG_i$  - the service capacity of the competing catering facilities, and  $c$  - the significance (influence) coefficient of the given factor. The dependence of

the demand function will be considered linear, inversely proportional to the service capacity of competing enterprises.

5. Distance ratio  $K_{ij}$

$K_{ij} = S_{2i} / S_{1j}$ , where  $S_{1j}$  – ,  $S_{2i}$  – the distance from the competitor-enterprise to the surrounding client-enterprise,  $i = 1..m, j = 1..n$ .

If  $K_{ij} > 1$  - the competitor-enterprise is located farther from the customer enterprise than the analysed enterprise.

If  $K_{ij} = 1$  - the competitor-enterprise is located at the same distance from the customer enterprise as the analysed enterprise.

If  $K_{ij} < 1$  - the competitor-enterprise is located closer to the customer enterprise than the analysed enterprise.

Further we will take as reference the demand function,  $y = f(S_i, P_i, G, K_{ij})$ , identified in the methodology proposed by the author mentioned above, where  $i = 1..m, j = 1..n$ . This function can be used to calculate the demand for PC services in a sector where there are more institutions and organizations and fewer residential blocks and which does not take into account the number of tenants in the residential block. At the same time, analysing the sector, which we proposed for research, we came to the conclusion that, because the sector chosen for the location of a new PCF is very crowded and there are many offices, schools, construction sites, but also residential blocks nearby, we opt for the location of a cafe that during the day will work with a simplified, cheaper menu and in which the self-service system will be applied, and in the evening customers will benefit from a more varied menu and customer will be served by waiters. In this regard, we propose the use of a modified methodology, which will also take into account the element related to the number of tenants in the area, according to the following formula of the demand function:

$$y = \sum_{i=1}^n (a * \sum 1 / ((\frac{S_i}{1000})^2 + b * P_i) - c * G + d * \sum \sum K_{ij} + e * L_i), \quad (2)$$

Where: n - is the number of "client enterprises";

$S_i$  - distance towards "customer enterprise";  $P_i$  - number of employees at the "customer enterprise";  $L_i$  – number of tenants at the residential blocks;

G- service capacity of the "Competing enterprises";  $K_{ij}$  - the distances ratio between customers and competitors;  $a_i, b_i, c_i, d_{ij}, c_i$  - coefficients of significance (influence) of the corresponding factors.

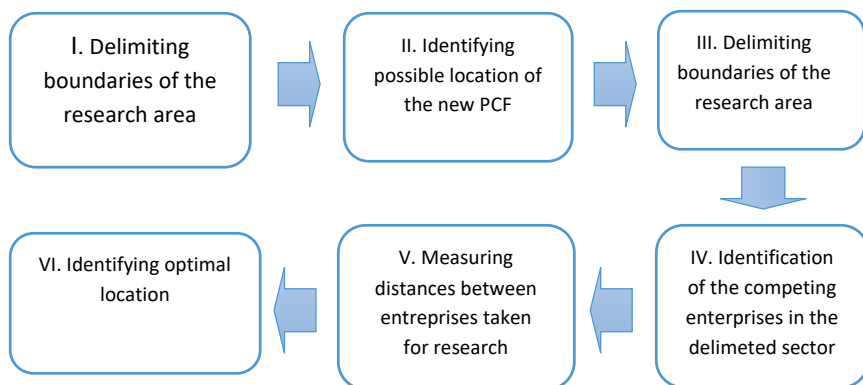
Since so far no coefficients of significance of the factors influencing the choice of the optimal location of a public catering facility have been developed, we resorted to the provision of scores by experts. This method involves the use of qualitative and quantitative information. In some cases, qualitative

characteristics must be quantified, i.e. we must assign them a form of quantitative expression. In this sense, experts usually use it to provide scores. In order to give the information a character of validity and trust, the following conditions were observed: Involvement of a sufficient number of experts; Ensuring that experts are competent in the researched issue; Lack of ambiguity and clarity of questions asked; Independence of the opinion of each expert.

In order to develop the mathematical model, we selected a certain area of Chisinau. The main condition for developing the model is the possibility to determine the value of demand at any point in the delimited sector. Knowing the demand function in any place of the analysed territory, one can find the most efficient location for new public catering enterprise of a certain type. Manually calculating all possible location options is an impossible task. For this purpose, we will use economic-mathematical modelling.

For the implementation of the model, it is necessary either a database with the necessary parameters of public catering companies for the studied region, or an electronic map of the street, sector or the city, which will automatically determine some of the parameters. We present this model using the electronic map Yandex Maps, which is currently the most popular electronic map system, representing an electronic guide of organizations combined with the city map.

For the elaboration of the mentioned model, we will go through the following steps:



**Figure 7. Algorithm of the optimal location identification model for a new public catering facility**

*Source:* elaborated by the author

Going through all the proposed stages, performing the necessary calculations, we identified the optimal location for the new cafe in the



Ciocana sector of Chisinau: Petru Zadnipru Street, 9, and the most unsuccessful location is the address Mircea cel Batran Alley, 1.

The calculations led us to the conclusion about the opportunity to create an automated model for the automatic determination of all necessary distances and the calculation of demand for any area as well as for the city as a whole. It should be noted that the demand function depends on a much larger number of factors, and the more factors are taken into account, the more accurate the demand function model is, but also the more complex.

## GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The importance and the actuality of the investigated problem is confirmed by the capitalization of theories regarding the competitiveness concept, of the approaches of the public catering service and the results of the research regarding the identification and capitalization of the competitiveness factors of PCFs. The theoretical and practical value of the research demonstrates the solution *of the scientific problem*, which costs in the theoretical and methodological substantiation of the factors influencing the activity of public catering facilities, which confirmed the need for continuous development of professional skills of employees and the opportunity to develop an identification methodology of the optimal location of the public catering facility according to its type, in order to ensure the competitiveness of public catering facility, which allowed the formulation of the following conclusions:

1. Public catering is considered a component of the wide range of services. By analysing the scientific sources, in order to achieve the first and second objectives of the thesis, we found that there are a number of approaches to the term "service" as well as a variety of criteria for classifying this concept. We argued that this is due to the extreme heterogeneity of the problems solved. At the same time, starting from the particularities of the service identified by us and characterized in the first chapter of the thesis, we defined *the service as an activity, organized by entrepreneurs, which aims to meet the various needs of people and, unlike material goods, has a set of distinct properties such as: intangibility, inseparability of the provider, variability, impossibility of storage, unsaturation and ability to materialize after a certain period.*

At the same time, public catering, although recognized as a service, has a much more complex character, being a field, which is not only a pure service, but also has product manufacturing activities, which are to be marketed. In this context, in the thesis we come to the argument that the notion of public catering must be treated as *a separate economic activity, associated with the production and sale of products and leisure activities, part of the food distribution circuit, organized to ensure access to food from producer to consumer, by increasing food consumption outside the household and retail.*

2. In order to achieve the third objective of the thesis, studying and generalizing the current level of knowledge regarding the competitiveness of public catering enterprises, we concluded that competitiveness is a topic of interest, which poses many challenges both theoretically, and practically. The competitiveness of the food sector is a less explored area, especially in domestic research. We explain this by the fact that public catering is a very complex, complicated, difficult to approach, although it is a field with a very high level of competition. Although PCF have some peculiarities, which we described in the thesis, at the same time, conceptually it does not differ from other enterprises in the national economy. In this context, we are of the opinion, which we argue in the thesis, that *the competitiveness of the public catering enterprise represents the capacity of the enterprise to produce culinary preparations and beverages that correspond to the culinary preferences of consumers, to organize consumption and provide entertainment services, high quality and affordable conviviality, to meet the needs of consumers, better than competitors, and for which consumers are willing to pay more than for products offered by competitors, thereby ensuring the core purpose of the company - maximizing profit, the main indicator of success or failure being considered productivity.*

3. Following the study carried out, analysing the opinions of scientists from different countries, in order to solve the fourth objective of the thesis, we identified the factors influencing the competitiveness of public catering enterprises, dividing them into internal and external. We argued that long-term competitiveness is determined by the competitiveness of financial, material, technological, managerial, informational, personnel, customer loyalty resources. We consider the last one as a special resource of the enterprise, and the availability of all resources allows the company to maintain the competitiveness of the offer for a long time.

4. In the thesis, we come with arguments, which confirms the achievement of the fifth objective of the research, by which we demonstrate that the modern food sector is a specific branch of the national economy, which at the country level is meant to solve a set of problems and to ensure the increase of the living standard of the population. The role and importance of the sector lies in public food policy, which aims to provide the population with access, in sustainable economic conditions and acceptable to all, to food, in safe, diversified, sufficient quantities, of good taste and nutritional quality, within a modern legislative base, which includes a set of concrete actions involving all public actors (state, local authorities, public institutions, etc.), private (professional agricultural organizations, agri - food industries and other actors in the food chain, research institutes, foundations, etc.) or associations (consumer or environmental organizations, charities, etc.), at national, regional or local levels. The enterprises in this branch participate in the formation of the national income

of the society, the production process is carried out at these enterprises, as a result of which are obtained new material goods, and in addition, the collective majority “consolidating” the population and increasing the potential of the labour force

5. In order to solve the other objectives that we put forward in front of the research and to validate the research hypotheses, we carried out a *quantitative study*, which allowed to obtain relevant results regarding the highlighting of the determinants of the competitiveness of PCFs. Based on the bibliographic sources studied, we developed 3 types of questionnaires, each being intended for a certain category of respondents: PCF leaders, employees and consumers of PC services. The results of the survey allowed us to identify that the basic problem faced by PCS is the shortage of skilled labour. We found the impact of employees' professional skills on the competitiveness of economic structures in the public catering sector and we developed the methodology for assessing the level of competences of employees in the field of public catering. Was developed a model of professional skills of specialists, aimed at increasing labour flexibility based on a cumulative matrix of employees' professional skills. The matrix allows the design and monitoring of the individual path of training and development of skills and, thus, the rational management of the workforce of the enterprise based on the degree of training of workers' skills for each functional area of the activity.

6. Empirical research has allowed us to highlight several factors influencing the competitiveness of PCFs. Along with the qualification of the employees, a factor, less studied, but confirmed to be important and which we set out to develop is the geographical location of the company. We argued that the modern attitude towards business is the task for entrepreneurs of choosing not the concept of a PCF from a certain location, but the *location of the facility for the development of a certain concept*. This approach is due to the priority of customer-oriented strategies in the PC industry, which contributes to the emergence of new unique ideas, as close as possible to today's requirements, which can surprise and even delight consumers of culinary production. Considering the location of PCF as a factor of competitiveness, which should not be neglected, based on a model developed by us, we determined the type of PCF and its location in the Ciocana sector of Chisinau.

Based on the research conducted and the results obtained, we will submit the following *recommendations*:

1. In the thesis, we mentioned that the stabilization and development of public catering facilities, the increase of competitiveness and, because of the efficiency of the enterprise's activity, depends to a large extent on the innovative changes implemented by them. In this context, we recommend the *Ministry of Health and Social Protection, Municipality of Chisinau, public authorities responsible for mass catering* to take over the practice of European countries on implementing technological innovations that allow cooking in advance, regeneration and decentralized portioning, far from where it will be served:

kindergartens, schools, hospitals and other social institutions. Such an innovative form of organization of production contributes to increasing the level of competitiveness of social food enterprises.

2. In our research, we identified one of the acute problems of the food sector: the lack of skilled labour. Because small and micro enterprises predominate in the field of public catering, the employer does not have enough possibilities, but also does not always understand the need for employee training. In this regard, we recommend the *National Association of Restaurants and Recreation Facilities (MÁR)* in partnership with the *Sectorial Training Committee in the field of Trade, Hotels and Restaurants of Moldova (CSFPCHR)*:

- To provide PCFs with support on the development of skills and competences, primarily of managers, in order to form a new professional profile of the manager, which would face the main challenges in the sector and would be able to implement and maintain innovative methods. This can be achieved by organization of free or low-cost modular training courses, involving national and international experts in the field, effectively based on the problems currently facing the sector and reducing the competitiveness of the facilities where operates;
- To provide support in the organization and maintenance of training and skills development courses for all categories of employees within the PCFs;
- To contribute to the formation of the legislation in the field of public catering by informing the central and local authorities about the problems in the field that appear in the application of the legislation and to form solutions for these problems.

3. The adaptation and development in this research of the model of optimal location of public catering facilities makes it possible to determine the location of a certain type of PCF in a certain territory where it is possible to obtain a maximum demand for public catering services. This allows us to make a recommendation to the *General Directorate of Architecture, Urban Planning and Land Relations of the Municipality of Chisinau*, to use the results of the study in the territorial planning of public catering units, thus contributing to the regulation of competition in this field.

Entrepreneurs who intend to open a new public catering unit and who are interested in ensuring the competitiveness of its activity can also use this study.

4. Another recommendation is addressed to the managers of public catering facilities:

- To use the methodology proposed in the study in order to assess the competitiveness of the units in terms of customers and employees

and identify the factors that influence the competitiveness of the company they manage;

- To implement the flexible work remuneration system based on the evaluation of the parameters of the competency-based competitiveness of the employees in each area.

5. The results of the scientific research carried out, the synthesis materials obtained as a result of elaboration of the thesis are of both theoretical and applied interest and we propose it to be used in the training process of the students from the Faculty of Business Management and Administration of ASEM:

- Cycle I, bachelors, specialty „Food technology and management” within the disciplines ”Public catering management”, „Organization and management in public catering units”; in the specialty ”Hotel services, tourism and leisure” within the discipline ”International management of food services”;
- Cycle II, masters, master’s programs ”Trade and expertise of goods in customs activity”, ”Technology and Management of public catering and Agro tourism” in the course ”Food safety management”.

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13. **TABUNȘCIC, Olga.** *Factors that influence the competitiveness of public food enterprises.* În: *Scientific Symposium Of Young Researchers XIV Edition Dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova*, 22-23 aprilie 2016, Chișinău, ASEM, 2016, pp.119-123, 0,36 c.a., ISBN 978-9975-75-823-9.
14. **TABUNȘCIC, Olga.** *Specializarea- tendință modernă în serviciile de alimentație publică.* În: „*Competitivitatea și inovarea în economia cunoașterii*”, Conferința Științifică Internațională din 25-26 septembrie 2015, Chișinău, ASEM, 2015, volumul I, pp. 142-147, 0, 85 c.a., ISBN 978-9975-75-771-3.
5. Other works and achievements specific to different scientific fields
15. **TABUNȘCIC, Olga.** *Analiza comparativă a pieței de servicii alimentare din Republica Moldova și din alte țări.* În: „*Dezvoltarea economico-socială durabilă a euroregiunilor și a zonelor transfrontaliere*”, Conferința Științifică Internațională din 09 noiembrie 2018, Iași, Institutul de Cercetări Economice și Sociale „Gheorghe Zane”, pp.476-484, 0,12 c.a., ISBN 978-606-685-616-4.
16. **TABUNȘCIC, Olga.** *Рентгенография рынка услуг питания в городе Кишинэу.* În: «*Кооперативное движение в системе развития сельских территорий*», Сборник научных трудов научно-практической конференции 06 iulie, 2018, Kazan, pp.133-138, 0,22 c.a., ISBN 978-5-91383-101-4.
17. **TABUNȘCIC, Olga.** *Aspecte privind asigurarea competitivității structurilor de alimentație publică din or. Chișinău.* În: „*Торговля товароведение и сервис: состояние проблемы и развития в условиях глобализации экономики*”, Conferința Internațională din 07 aprilie 2017, Кишинёв – Kazan, pp.41-46, 0,32 c.a., ISBN 978-9975-3152-6-5.

## ANNOTATION

**Olga Tabunșic:** *Competitiveness insurance of public food enterprises (the case of the Republic of Moldova)*, doctoral thesis in economics science, Chisinau, 2020.

**Thesis structure:** the thesis consists in: introduction, three chapters, conclusions, recommendations, bibliography and annexes. The thesis base text contains: 148 pages, 52 figures, 31 tables, 26 annexes and 208 references. The final results are published in 15 scientific works.

**Keywords:** competitiveness, competition, strategies, catering unit, service, catering service, competence.

**Field of Study:** 521.03 - Economy and management in the catering service business.

**Purpose of the thesis** is to develop theoretical and methodological approaches to ensure the competitiveness of catering enterprises.

**Thesis objectives:** The concept of the public catering service as a distinct segment of the market economy; Highlighting the role and economic importance of the food sector; Outlining the current state of knowledge in the field of competitiveness of public catering enterprises; Identifying the influencing factors of the competitiveness of public catering enterprises; Economic analysis of the public catering sector in Republic of Moldova and market of the public food in Chisinau; Performing a survey among managers, consumers and employees in order to identify how public catering companies pursue the development of competitiveness and how much importance it has in the development of enterprises; Identifying the influencing factors on the competitiveness of food industry in the Republic of Moldova; Substantiation of conceptual approaches to managing the competitiveness of public food organization staff in the context of implementing the competency-based approach; Determining the optimal location for a public food business in Chisinau.

**The scientific novelty of the research consists in:** Systematized the approaches regarding the definition of the concept "service" and highlighting a classification of them, according to the components of the service; sorting public catering services according to the model of Maslow's pyramid; comparative analysis of the types of public catering units in Moldova, Romania, Russia, France; contouring the concept "public catering enterprise competitiveness"; identifying the factors which are influencing the competitiveness of public catering enterprises; implementing the model of identification of the optimal location for a new public catering business and elaborating its algorithm; development of the professional competency model for specialists from public alimentation business, oriented towards to increase the labor force flexibility.

**The solved scientific problem consists in** the theoretical and methodological base of the competitiveness of public catering business factor which established the need of developing an algorithm to increase the professional competency of the staff and a methodology for identifying the optimal location of a public catering company.

**The theoretical significance** consists in applying the conceptual approaches on public catering, in theories about the competitiveness of enterprises and also improving the methodology for estimating the competitiveness of public catering in the context of developing theoretical and methodological bases in this field.

**The applicative value of the thesis** consists in the implementation of the main scientific results for an efficiency activity of public catering companies. In the main time, the results can help for futures research of competitiveness factors of public catering companies.

**Implementation of scientific results.** The scientific results were implemented in SRL "La Harap Alb" and are proposed to be used in the training of students from ASEM Academy, faculty Business and Administration.



## ADNOTARE

**Olga Tabușnic:** *Asigurarea competitivității întreprinderilor din alimentația publică (cazul Republica Moldova)*, teză de doctor în științe economice, Chișinău, 2020.

**Structura tezei:** teza constă din introducere, trei capitole, concluzii și recomandări, bibliografie, anexe. Textul de bază conține 148 de pagini, 52 de figuri, 31 de tabele, 26 anexe, 208 referințe. Rezultatele obținute sunt publicate în 15 lucrări științifice.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** competitivitate, concurență, strategii, unitate de alimentație publică, serviciu, serviciu de alimentație publică, competență.

**Domeniul de studiu:** 521.03 – Economie și management în domeniul de activitate.

**Scopul lucrării** constă în dezvoltarea abordărilor teoretice și metodologice în vederea asigurării competitivității întreprinderilor de alimentație publică.

**Obiectivele lucrării:** Conceptualizarea serviciului de alimentație publică ca segment distinct al economiei de piață; Evidențierea rolului și importanței economice a sectorului alimentației publice ca activitate economică separată; Conturarea stadiului actual al cunoașterii în domeniul competitivității întreprinderilor de alimentație publică; Identificarea factorilor de influență ai competitivității întreprinderilor de alimentație publică; Analiza situației economice a sectorului alimentației publice din Republica Moldova și a pieței de alimentație publică în municipiul Chișinău; Efectuarea unui sondaj în rândul managerilor, consumatorilor și angajaților; Elaborarea soluțiilor de asigurare a competitivității unităților de alimentație publică din Republica Moldova; Fundamentarea abordărilor conceptuale de gestiune a competitivității personalului organizației de AP în contextul implementării abordării bazate pe competențe; Determinarea locației optime pentru o UAP în mun. Chișinău în baza dezvoltării unui model matematic.

**Noutatea științifică a rezultatelor cercetării** constă în: Sistematizarea abordărilor cu privire la definirea conceptului „serviciu” și evidențierea unei clasificări a acestora, în funcție de componentele serviciului; ordonarea serviciilor de alimentație publică după modelul piramidei lui Maslow, bazată pe nivele, ce includ elementele distinctive ale serviciilor de alimentație publică, legate de consum, siguranță, apartenență socială, statut și autoafirmare; efectuarea studiului teoretic privind analiza comparativă a tipurilor de unități de alimentație publică în Moldova, România, Rusia, Franța; concretizarea conceptului de „competitivitate al întreprinderii de alimentație publică”, evidențierea componentelor de bază ale acesteia; identificarea factorilor de influență asupra competitivității întreprinderilor de alimentație publică și elaborarea soluțiilor de asigurare a competitivității unităților de alimentație publică; adaptarea modelului de identificare a locației optime pentru o unitate nouă de alimentație publică și elaborarea algoritmului acestuia; dezvoltarea modelului competențelor profesionale a specialiștilor din alimentația publică, orientat spre sporirea flexibilității forței de muncă.

**Problema științifică soluționată** constă în: fundamentarea teoretică și metodologică a factorilor de influență asupra activității unităților de alimentație publică, fapt care a confirmat necesitatea dezvoltării continue a competențelor profesionale ale angajaților din domeniu și oportunitatea dezvoltării unei metodologii de identificare a amplasării optime a unei unități de alimentație publică în funcție de tipul acesteia, în vederea asigurării competitivității unităților de alimentație publică.

**Semnificația teoretică** constă în: contribuțiile aduse la concretizarea noțiunilor de serviciu, serviciu de alimentație publică, competitivitatea întreprinderilor de alimentație publică, identificarea factorilor de influență asupra competitivității acestora, evidențierea criteriilor de evaluare a competitivității UAP, completarea modelului de identificare a amplasării optime a unității de alimentație publică, dezvoltarea modelului competențelor profesionale a specialiștilor din alimentația publică, orientat spre sporirea flexibilității forței de muncă.

**Valoarea aplicativă a lucrării:** este determinată de posibilitatea de a utiliza rezultatele de bază ale tezei pentru eficientizarea activității unităților de alimentație publică. De asemenea aceste rezultate ale cercetării pot servi drept bază pentru cercetările ulterioare, mai profunde a factorilor care influențează competitivitatea UAP.

**Implementarea rezultatelor științifice:** Rezultatele științifice au fost implementate în unitatea de alimentație publică SRL „La Harap Alb” și sunt utilizate în procesul de instruire al studenților ASEM de la facultatea Business și Administrarea Afacerilor.

## АННОТАЦИЯ

к диссертации на соискание ученой степени доктора экономических наук

**Обеспечение конкурентоспособности предприятий общественного питания (на примере Республики Молдова)**, автор Ольга ТАБУНЩИК, специальность 521.03 – Экономика и управление в сфере деятельности, Кишинев, 2020.

**Структура работы:** введение, три главы, общие выводы и рекомендации, библиография, приложения. Основной текст содержит 148 страницы, 52 фигур, 31 таблицы, 26 приложения, 208 ссылок. Результаты диссертации были изложены в 15 научных статьях.

**Ключевые слова:** конкурентоспособность, конкуренция, стратегии, предприятия общественного питания, услуга общественного питания, компетенция.

**Цель и задачи работы:** является разработка теоретико - методологических подходов к обеспечению конкурентоспособности предприятий общественного питания.

**Задачи исследования** – Концептуализация услуги общественного питания как отдельного сегмента рыночной экономики; Выявление современного состояния знаний в области конкурентоспособности предприятий общественного питания; Подчеркивание роли и экономического значения сектора общественного питания как отдельной экономической деятельности; Выявление факторов, влияющих на конкурентоспособность предприятий общественного питания; Экономический анализ ситуации в секторе общественного питания Кишинёва; Проведение опроса менеджеров, потребителей и сотрудников ПОП; Разработка решений для обеспечения конкурентоспособности ПОП в Республике Молдова; Обоснование концептуальных подходов к конкурентоспособности персонала ПОП; Определение оптимального месторасположения ПОП в Кишинёве на основе разработки математической модели.

**Научная новизна и оригинальность исследования** состоит в: Систематизации подходов определения понятия «услуга» и выделение их классификации по компонентам услуги, согласно модели пирамиды Маслоу, основанной на уровнях, которые включают отличительные элементы услуг общественного питания, связанные с потреблением, безопасностью, социальной принадлежностью и самоутверждению; Проведение теоретического исследования по сравнительномк анализу типов ПОП в Республике Молдова, Румынии, России, Франции; конкретизация понятия «конкурентоспособность ПОП», выделение его основных компонентов; выявление факторов, влияющих на конкурентоспособность ПОП и разработка решений для обеспечения конкурентоспособности ПОП; адаптация модели определения оптимального местоположения для нового ПОП и разработка модели профессиональных компетенций специалистов общественного питания, направленной на повышение гибкости рабочей силы.

**Важная решенная научная проблема исследования** состоит в: теоретическом и методологическом обосновании факторов, влияющих на деятельность ПОП, что подтвердило необходимость постоянного развития профессиональных навыков работников отрасли и возможность разработки методики определения оптимального местоположения объекта общественного питания в зависимости от его типа в целях обеспечения конкурентоспособности предприятий общественного питания.

**Теоретическое значение работы** состоит из: вклада внесённого в определение понятий - услуга общественного питания, конкурентоспособность ПОП; выявление факторов, влияющих на конкурентоспособность ПОП, выделение критериев для оценки конкурентоспособности ПОП, завершение модели определения оптимального местоположения ПОП, разработка модели профессиональных навыков специалистов общественного питания, направленной на повышение гибкости труда.

**Практическая значимость исследования** определяется возможностью использования основных результатов диссертации для оптимизации деятельности ПОП. Кроме того, эти результаты исследований могут послужить основой для дальнейших, более глубоких исследований факторов, влияющих на конкурентоспособность ПОП.

**Внедрение научных результатов.** Научные результаты были внедрены на предприятии общественного питания ООО «La Nağar Alb» и используются в учебном процессе обучения студентов факультета «Бизнес и Деловое администрирование» Молдавской Экономической Академии.

**TABUNȘCIC OLGA**

**ENSURING THE COMPETITIVENESS OF THE PUBLIC  
CATERING ENTERPRISES (case of the Republic of Moldova)**

**SPECIALTY 521.03 - ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT  
IN THE FIELD OF ACTIVITY**

**Thesis summary of the doctor in economics**

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