

ASPECTS REGARDING THE DEFINITION, RECOGNITION AND VALUATION OF FIXED ASSETS ACCORDING TO THE ACCOUNTING RULES OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Abstract

The accounting legislative and regulatory framework of the Republic of Moldova treats fixed assets in a specific way, according to local accounting practices. In the framework of the scientific research carried out, the aim was to analyse the regulations and literature on the accounting of fixed assets, as well as to study the approaches to the concepts of "fixed assets" and the requirements for their recognition and evaluation. In this context, the article highlights the essential peculiarities of the treatment of fixed assets in accordance with the legislative and normative accounting framework of the Republic of Moldova.

The research objectives are to analyze accounting regulations, literature and tax legislation, as well as to identify differences between national and international accounting standards. The methodology used combined qualitative and quantitative analysis of the relevant legislative regulations, complemented by a comparative approach between the international and national regulatory framework. The scientific problem addressed centres on the correlation of national and international regulations in ensuring uniform accounting treatment of fixed assets.

The conclusions of the research emphasize the importance of harmonization of national and international accounting standards, as well as the need to clarify the requirements for recognition and valuation of fixed assets to ensure transparency and fairness. The main contribution of the authors is to provide an in-depth analysis of the accounting and tax regulations relevant to the field of "fixed assets" in the Republic of Moldova.

Keywords

Fixed assets, International Financial Reporting Standards, National Accounting Standards, recognition, valuation.

JEL Classification

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Introduction

Fixed asset accounting is central to national and international accounting regulation because fixed assets represent a significant part of an entity's assets. They are long-term assets in the conduct of economic activities and have a direct impact on the entity's financial statements. In practice, the value and condition of fixed assets influence both the profitability and solvency of an entity. For example, the correct calculation of depreciation of fixed assets can reduce taxes payable and provide a clear picture of the carrying amount of assets, which helps investors and other stakeholders to better understand the financial position of the entity.

In today's rapidly changing business processes, rapid changes in technology and market demands require continuous adaptability of fixed assets. Fixed asset accounting helps entities to understand the economic impact of equipment upgrades, digitization and investments in sustainability, and their correct reporting is essential for attracting investment and developing a favourable business climate. These issues need to be covered by specific accounting rules, both nationally and internationally, to ensure transparency.

This research aims to analyze and clarify the specific aspects of the notion of "fixed assets" and the requirements of national legislation on their recognition and measurement in comparison with international accounting standards.

The relevance of the research topic derives from the highlighting of some national particularities regarding the accounting treatment of "fixed assets". As part of the investigation of the accounting regulatory framework, the principles and rules applicable to them at the entity level were analyzed.

The importance of the subject under investigation is evident not only from the perspective of compliance with accounting regulations, but also from a strategic point of view, as it influences direct management decisions, efficient allocation of resources and the adaptability of entities in the face of new global economic realities.

Within national accounting regulations, fixed assets accounting is based on national standards that set out the methods of recording methods, assessment of maintenance costs as well as depreciation, all with the aim of providing a clear picture of their value and depreciation. In addition, compliance with local tax rules is essential to ensure the fairness of tax deductions related to depreciation and to prevent potential conflicts with tax authorities.

International accounting regulations are set out in the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), which establish uniform rules for recognizing and measuring fixed assets. These rules are essential for entities that operate cross-border or are listed on international markets, ensuring access to global capital through financial transparency. IFRS also provide a standardized framework allowing comparability between entities in different countries, which is important for investors, analysts and other stakeholders.

Thus, the importance of fixed asset accounting in national and international accounting regulations is to ensure an accurate valuation of an entity's assets and to support their efficient management, contributing to transparency and fundamental economic decision-making.

To clarify and better structure the research approach, we have presented in Figure 1 the purpose, objectives and methodology of the research, highlighting national and

international accounting regulations on fixed assets are analyzed, based on a documentary and comparative methodology, which allows a correct and thorough assessment of their congruence in the accounting practice of the Republic of Moldova.

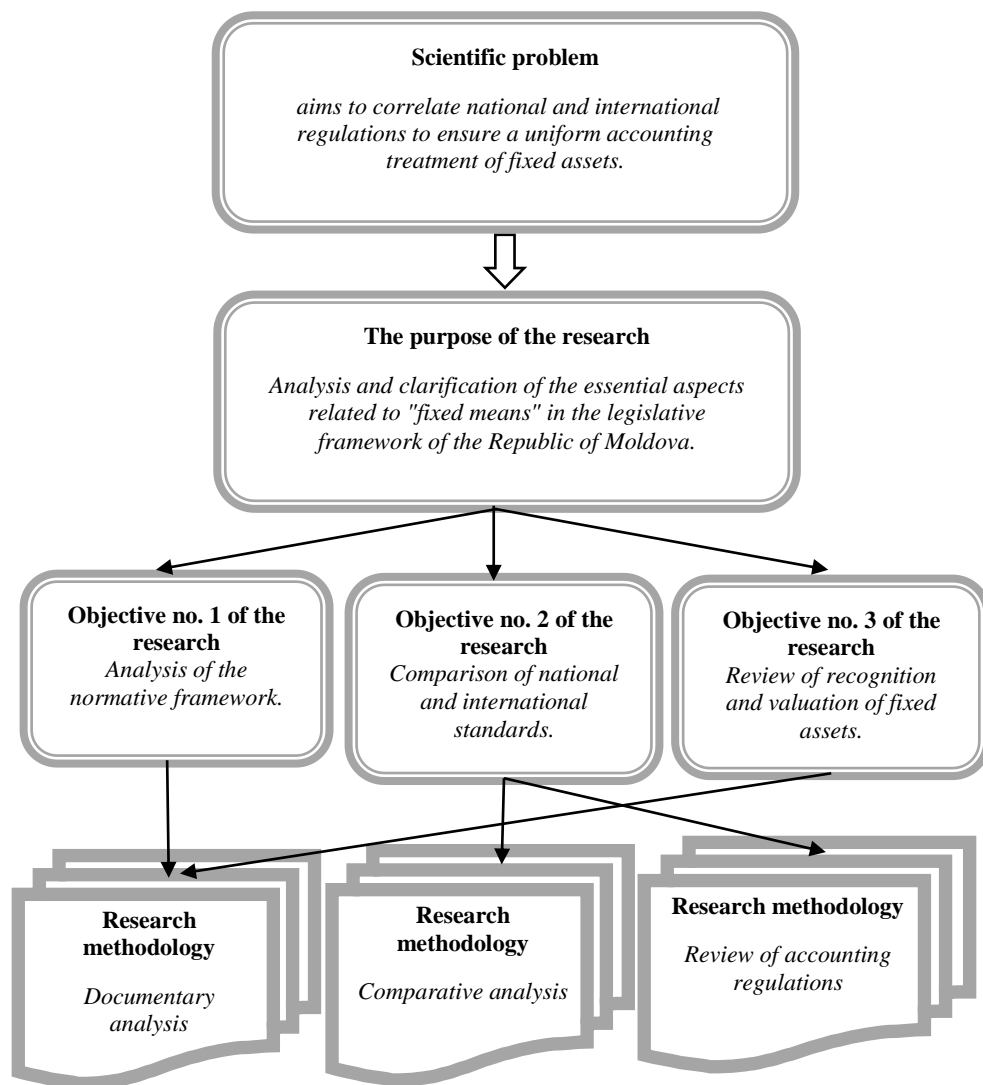


Figure no. 1. Conceptual structure of the research

Source: developed by the authors

The research methodology included consulting the accounting normative framework, specialized literature, as well as bibliographic sources published in national scientific journals or available online. The authors performed a detailed analysis of the specialized literature, summarizing the results obtained.

In the selection of bibliographic sources and accounting rules, criteria such as topicality, relevance to the main theme and academic quality of the sources were used. The comparative approach between the national and international provisions was used and this allows the evaluation of accounting harmonization, to highlight the convergence of the regulations and to highlight the differences that influence useful decisions, contributing to the identification of the best practices applicable at the national level.

1. Analysis of the regulations and specialized literature related to the accounting of fixed assets

In the context of national and international accounting regulations, the analysis of norms and literature on fixed assets accounting is essential to understand the processes of their definition, recognition and valuation in modern accounting systems. Thus, depending on the area of regulation, accounting laws and regulations in the Republic of Moldova can be classified into two main categories:

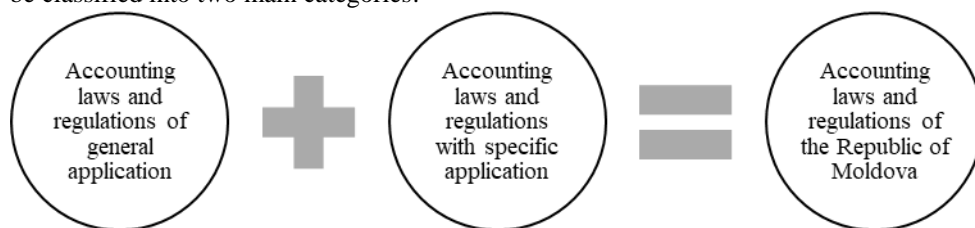


Figure no. 2. Classification of accounting laws and regulations in the Republic of Moldova by regulatory area

Source: developed by the authors

The acts of general application establish the fundamental legal framework, applicable to all entities, and provide general rules on the organization of accounting and financial reporting. These rules constitute the legal basis for the management of activities within the entities. Specific implementing acts, on the other hand, detail the technical methods and procedures required to account for and manage certain items, including fixed assets. Below, the composition of each category of accounting legislation and regulations related to fixed assets is detailed in Figure 3.

The classification of accounting laws and regulations according to general and specific applicability highlights the diversity of regulations governing accounting in the Republic of Moldova. These rules, in compliance with international and national standards, provide a clear guide to the recognition, measurement, depreciation, amortization and presentation of fixed assets.

Therefore, a key aspect of the accounting regulations in the Republic of Moldova, relevant to fixed assets accounting, is the requirements for the financial reporting

framework. According to Article 5 of the Law on Accounting and Financial Reporting No. 287 of 15.12.2017, "Public Interest Entities are mandated to adopt IFRS, while other entities, including micro, small, medium, and large enterprises, can choose between IFRS and NAS, according to Art. 5 para. (11) of the said law. This two option approach has far-reaching implications for the recognition, measurement and reporting of fixed assets. IFRS emphasizes global comparability, transparency and investor-oriented reporting, while the NAS reflects local economic conditions and simplicity, making it more accessible to smaller businesses" [13].

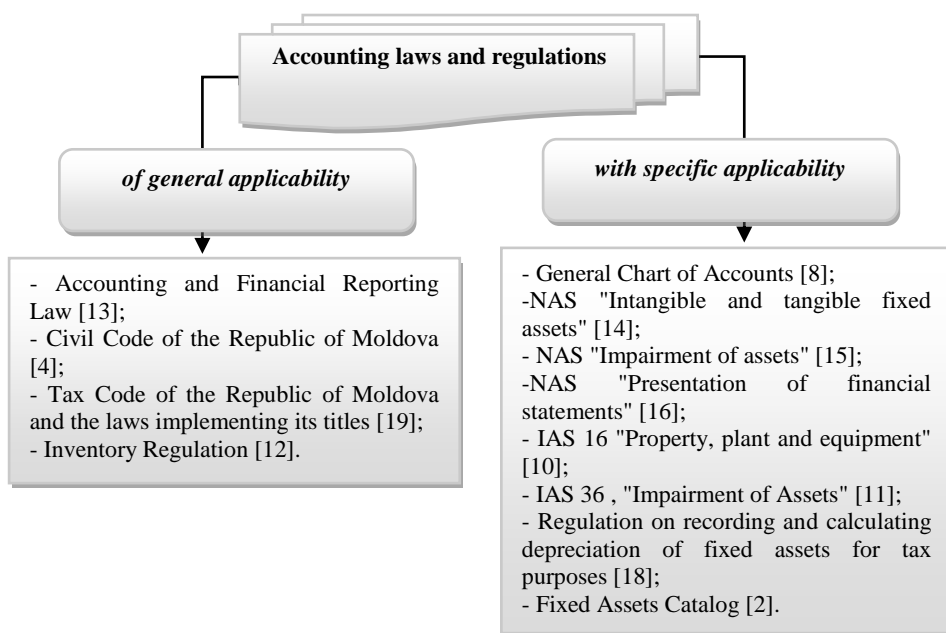


Figure no. 3. Structure and classification of accounting normative and legislative acts in the Republic of Moldova

Source: developed by the authors

The Civil Code of the Republic of Moldova "provides a detailed classification of certain fixed assets in the category of immovable property. In this category are included land, portions of subsoil, separate aquatic objects, permanent plantations (connected by roots), as well as buildings and constructions. At the same time, the Code lays down general provisions governing the commercial intermediation of these types of property by means of sale and purchase contracts" [4]. The legislation in force thus provides a clear and uniform legal framework for commercial transactions involving immovable property, contributes to ensuring transparency and securing contractual relations in this sector. They underline the importance of rigorous regulation in promoting a functioning and sustainable real estate market, and provide a basis for further research on the interactions between civil law and national economic dynamics.

On the other hand, the Tax Code of the Republic of Moldova defines the criteria for categorizing property as fixed assets. According to Art. (2), "fixed assets subject to depreciation are those tangible assets reflected in the balance sheet of the taxpayer, which have a useful life of more than one year and a value of more than 12,000 lei, threshold applicable in force with January 1, 2023. At the same time, these assets must be intended for use in the entrepreneurial activity, and their tax record must be realized individually for each object" [19].

Thus, the Civil Code and the Tax Code provide a complementary regulatory framework, covering both the general legal aspects of fixed assets and the technical and fiscal aspects necessary for proper accounting management.

The useful life of fixed assets, an essential aspect of accounting and fiscal management, is regulated by the Government of the Republic of Moldova. By Government Decision No. 941 of 22.12.2020, the Catalog of Fixed Assets was approved, "setting minimum and maximum limits for the useful life of assets. Undertakings and legal persons must align the fiscal useful life with the financial useful life in accordance with the minimum limits specified in the annexes to the catalog, irrespective of the maximum limits" [2].

In addition, the Regulation on recording and calculating the depreciation of fixed assets for tax purposes, approved by Government Decision no. 704 of 27.12.2019, "provides a detailed methodological framework, describing the procedures for recording and calculating depreciation of fixed assets, regulates the determination of the repair expenses allowed for deduction and details how to calculate the tax result in case of the removal of fixed assets from the assets of the entity" [18].

Thus, these regulations contribute to the rigorous management of fixed assets, ensuring harmonization between accounting and tax records, as well as compliance with the principles of transparency and tax fairness. These rules play an essential role in the decision-making process of entities, providing clarity in the management of long-term assets.

The normative acts with specific applicability in the field of fixed assets accounting represent an essential set of regulations that provide the necessary normative framework for correct and unitary accounting of fixed assets in the Republic of Moldova. They establish clear rules on the recognition, valuation, depreciation and reporting of fixed assets, contributing to the harmonization of accounting with national and international requirements, as well as to compliance with tax compliance.

In the field of fixed assets accounting, numerous relevant works have been elaborated, dealing with issues such as the rationale for the selection of the depreciation method by the entity [1], accounting for the depreciation of fixed assets in the national and international context [9], the peculiarities of fixed assets accounting in non-commercial enterprises [3], the analysis of the significance threshold of fixed assets as ease or a challenge [6], as well as the specificity of fixed assets accounting in budgetary institutions [7].

2. Theoretical and practical analysis of the concept of fixed assets and the requirements associated with their recognition and measurement in accounting

The concept of "fixed assets" is addressed separately, but interrelated, in various accounting and tax regulations. According to the National Accounting Standard (NAS) "Intangible and Tangible Fixed Assets," fixed assets are defined as tangible assets transferred in use whose unit value exceeds either the value threshold established by tax law or the significance threshold determined by the entity in its accounting sales policy. This definition emphasizes the interdependence between tax and accounting regulations, highlighting the role of entities in adapting the value thresholds to reflect the specifics of economic activity and financial reporting" [14]. This definition therefore emphasizes the value of the asset as well as its role in the operating process of the enterprise. It reflects the continuing use of an asset for a significant in the economic activity of the entity. At the same time, the definition emphasizes the importance of the value of assets and the tax threshold as an essential aspect of accounting for them, but could include more detail on their purpose in the entity's operations.

The authors of the "Accounting Basics" manual [17] suggest that the term "fixed" emphasizes the idea of durability and long-term use, indicating that these assets are not intended to be sold or consumed quickly, but to be used continuously in the conduct of economic activities. Thus, the term "fixed" serves the function of demarcating these assets from those that are consumable or short-lived.

In the context of Directive 2013/34/EU, the notion of "fixed assets" refers to those "assets intended to serve the activities of the undertaking for a long period, which emphasizes the importance of this category of assets in the conduct of the economic activity in the long term" [5]. The definition implicitly includes a sustainability component, aiming at providing the necessary resources for a stable activity.

On the other hand, IAS 16 "Property, plant and equipment" refers to "property, plant and equipment" as those "assets held for use over a long period for the purpose of producing or supplying goods or services, for rental or administrative use" [10]. This definition refers to the continuous use of the asset in the economic operations of the entity, including for administrative purposes, which emphasizes its durability and its essential role in the functioning of the enterprise.

Tax legislation regulates the notion of "fixed assets" from several perspectives, having regard to specific definitions and tax regulations, which are essential for determining the taxable amount of these assets and for the correct application of tax deductions. The definitions provided by tax legislation may vary according to the value thresholds set for each entity's activity, but generally refer to the same essential features: durability, economic use and significant value, Table 1.

In our opinion, the definitions provided by the legislative and normative acts in the field of "fixed assets" are convergent about their essential characteristics: they are tangible assets intended for long-term use in economic activity, the values of which progressively decrease as a result of physical and moral depreciation. These assets are reflected in the taxpayer's balance sheet and are subject to depreciation during their period of use. At the same time, the minimum value of a fixed asset is regulated by specific thresholds, and the putting into service of the assets signifies the moment at which they fall into the category of fixed assets.

Table 1. Tax treatment of fixed assets in the Republic of Moldova

Legislative or normative act	References	Definitions related to fixed assets
Tax Code of the Republic of Moldova [19]	article 26 ¹ paragraph (2)	The fixed assets on which the depreciation is calculated are the tangible property reflected in the balance sheet of the taxpayer the legislation and which is intended to be used in entrepreneurial activity, the value of which presumably decreases as a result of physical and moral wear and whose period of use is more than one year and its value exceeds the amount of 12000 lei.
Regulation on recording and calculating depreciation of fixed assets for tax purposes [18]	point 13	Fixed assets - tangible fixed assets transferred in use for more than one year, whose unit value exceeds the value threshold provided for in Article 26 ¹ para. (2) of the Fiscal Code no. 1163/1997
Fixed assets catalog [2]	point 5	Objects shall be regarded as fixed assets from the moment they are put into service.

Source: developed by the authors

In general, the legislative framework of the Republic of Moldova clearly regulates the notion of fixed assets, emphasizing their essential role in the economic activities of the entities and also establishing the method of calculating their depreciation. These regulations are fundamental for the efficient management of resources and have a direct impact on the correct determination of taxpayers' tax liabilities.

In this context, Article 26¹ of the Tax Code of the Republic of Moldova specifies that, for tax purposes, fixed assets subject to depreciation are considered fixed assets subject to amortization investments made in assets subject to specific agreements, such as: "operating lease", "contract of lease or sublease", "concession contract", "hire or leasing contract" [19].

The term "investment in fixed assets" means, according to paragraph 3 of Article 26¹, the excess expenditure on repairs, improvements and other similar expenditures the usual expenditure on the fixed assets concerned. Expenditure which is not regarded as surplus is, however, allowed as a deduction in the tax period, the regulations set out in paragraph 11 of the same Article, subject to the following conditions:

- "expenditure relates to the current or capital repair of fixed assets";
- "expenditure is incurred within the same tax period";
- "their deduction is allowed up to 15% of the amount calculated for rental, lease, operating lease or royalty (concession payment)";
- "these expenses do not fall within the provisions of paragraph 2 of Article 26¹ of the Tax Code" [19].

Thus, the tax framework spells out precisely the conditions for deducting expenses related to fixed assets, laying down clear rules for entrepreneurs in terms of investment and depreciation.

Fixed assets that do not fall under the provisions of para. (2) of Article 26¹ of the Tax Code refers to those assets used in the entrepreneurial activity of the economic agent, based on operational leasing, rental, lease, rental or concession contracts. These contracts stipulate that the related expenses are borne by the lessor, lessee or concessionaire, according to the agreed terms.

The notion of fixed assets is also regulated in the Regulation on the recording and calculation of their depreciation for tax purposes, approved by Government Decision no. 704 of 27.12.2019. The definition in this regulation does not include the term "investments made in fixed assets", but relevant notions such as: "depreciable value", "adjusted entry value", and "capitalized entry value" [18].

For tax purposes, the capitalized input value of fixed assets is their initial value plus any expenditure (subsequent costs) incurred for repair or development, which contributes to improving or extending the life of the asset.

The catalogue of fixed assets, approved by Government Decision no. 941 of 22.12.2020, defines an object as a fixed asset if it meets two essential conditions:

- "their recognition is made in accordance with the provisions of tax legislation",
- and
- "the object concerned shall be included in fixed assets only when it is put into service" [2].

The recognition of fixed assets is an essential aspect in the accounting process, having a direct impact on the accuracy and transparency of financial statements. In the following, we intend to analyze this subject in detail. Thus, the process of recognizing and valuing accounting items is an indispensable part of the accounting cycle, and fixed assets are no exception, being recorded in the accounts and reflected in the financial statements. They must meet the definition and recognition criteria set out in accounting standards. The general principles, set out in the accounting legislative framework of the Republic of Moldova, are essential to the process of recognizing accounting items and include: accrual accounting, prudence and non-compensation, measurement at entry cost, materiality [13]. These principles govern the accounting treatment of fixed assets and are necessary to ensure accurate records by national accounting rules.

Accrual accounting is a fundamental principle whereby accounting items are recognized as they arise, regardless of when cash is received or paid, or offset in some other way.

Unlike cash accounting, which focuses on actual cash flows, accrual accounting allows assets and liabilities to be recognized when they are generated, without being influenced by the timing of payment or receipt.

By the principle of valuation at cost, fixed assets should be valued at acquisition or production cost. This is necessary to ensure fair and transparent reporting in the financial statements. However, in situations in which the effects of meeting the recognition and measurement requirements are immaterial, the recognition, measurement, presentation and consolidation of the related financial information need not be applied in full.

Thus, compliance with the principles of accrual accounting and valuation at input cost ensures correct financial reporting, reflecting the fidelity of the entity's financial situation and avoiding distortions related to the timing of payments or receipts.

According to Article 16 of Directive 2013/34/EU, companies are required to provide, in the explanatory notes to the financial statements, additional information regarding fixed assets valued at revalued values. This information includes the following:

- a) "movements of the revaluation reserve during the financial year, together with a detailed explanation of the tax treatment applied to the elements included in this reserve";
- b) "the accounting value of the fixed assets, which would have been recognized if they had not been revalued" [5].

Also, the elements presented in the annual and consolidated financial statements are recognized and evaluated according to the principle of consistent application of accounting policies. In addition, the evaluation and recognition of these accounting elements is based on a prudent principle, aiming to ensure a true and fair view of the entity's financial situation.

To better understand the fixed assets recognition process, the table below shows the criteria-which is its basis.

Table no. 2. Key criteria applied to the recognition of fixed assets

No.crt.	IAS 16	NAS "Intangible and Tangible Assets"
1.	Probability of generating future economic benefits	Obtaining future economic benefits from the use of the object
2.	The cost of the item can be reliably assessed	The input cost of the item can be reliably assessed
3.	X	The object is identifiable and controllable by the entity
4.	X	The unit value exceeds the value ceiling

Source: developed by the underlying authors [10], [14]

From the comparison, it can be seen that both regulations (IAS 16 and NAS "Intangible and Tangible Assets") focus on the reliable assessment of the cost of the asset and the generation of economic benefits, but differ in the specificity of certain characteristics. IAS 16 is more oriented towards the general principles of measurement and use, while the NAS places additional emphasis on value thresholds and the entity's effective control of assets.

According to IAS 16, the application of professional judgment is essential for the recognition of fixed assets, considering the particular circumstances of each entity. The standard states that this flexible approach is necessary to decide whether an asset meets the recognition criteria, such as control over future economic benefits and measurable costs. Exemplifying professionally such as the use of judgment, IAS 16 claims that for certain elements, considered individually insignificant, their aggregation can be justified, for example, in the case of some types components, tools and dies. Thus, their aggregation within an asset of aggregate value can be considered appropriate, in the context where their cumulative financial impact exceeds the threshold of materiality and

relevance for the entity. Therefore, the professional judgment within this application of IAS 16 allows necessary flexibility in the context of the diversity of economic activities and the specificities of each entity.

In the process of recognizing an object of fixed assets, it is necessary to respect the principle according to its input cost which can be evaluated with a high degree of credibility. Thus, the entity must evaluate all costs incurred, including, (a) the initial costs incurred for the acquisition or construction of the objects, (b) the subsequent costs for the partial replacement of the components, and (c) the subsequent costs related to the maintenance of the object. This principle guarantees a correct reflection of the value of the object in the entity's financial statements.

The cost component may also include costs incurred in connection with leasing contracts for assets that are used for the construction, addition, partial replacement or maintenance of the object. According to art. 26¹ (3) of the Fiscal Code of the Republic of Moldova, the investments made in fixed assets that are the subject of an operational leasing contract, location, concession, lease, loan, and sublease are subject to depreciation [19]. Therefore, the integration of these costs contributes to a complete assessment of the expenses related to the assets used in the economic activities, reflecting an approach that complies with both tax rules and accounting principles.

After the recognition of fixed assets, the valuation process becomes essential to correctly reflect their value in relation to their long-term economic use, by accounting principles and national tax regulations, to ensure a true and fair picture of the entity's financial situation.

Fixed assets are subject to structured valuation processes, which include initial valuation, which takes place at the time the asset is recognized, and subsequent valuation, carried out at the reporting date, to reflect value adjustments or its depreciation.

These valuations are regulated by NAS "Intangible and tangible fixed assets" and IAS 16 "Tangible fixed assets", which establish the methodological framework and technical requirements for the valuation of fixed assets, thus ensuring compliance with accounting standards. Therefore, the valuation of fixed assets is not only a formal accounting process, but a practice that allows the faithful reflection of their values about their long-term economic use, adapted to market changes and depreciation of assets.

The table below shows the details of the two types of valuation, namely the initial valuation and the subsequent valuation, according to the NAS "Intangible and tangible assets" stability regulations and IAS 16.

Table no. 3. Evaluation of fixed assets through the lens of accounting standards

Evaluation	The applicable standard	The intended methodology
Initial evaluation	NAS "Intangible and tangible fixed assets" [14, pct. 4, pct. 7]	The input cost represents the costs of procuring or creating the record object and the directly attributable costs to bring it to the place and in the condition required for its intended use. The composition of the entry cost differs depending on the method of entry of the object: by purchase, independent creation, receipt in exchange, in the form of a contribution to the social capital, free of charge, under economic management, etc.

Evaluation	The applicable standard	The intended methodology
	IAS 16 "Tangible assets" [10, pct. 6]	Cost represents the amount in cash or cash equivalents paid or the fair value of other consideration provided to acquire an asset at the time of its acquisition or construction or, where applicable, the value attributed to that asset when it is initially recognized in accordance with specific provisions of other IFRSs.
Further evaluation	NAS "Intangible and tangible fixed assets" [14, pct.17, pct. 18]	Fixed assets are valued according to the cost-based model, that is, the input or corrected cost reduced by the amount of accumulated depreciation and impairment losses. Subsequent valuation of fixed assets can also be carried out based on the revaluation model. This pattern applies to all objects of the asset class to which the revalued object belongs. A class of fixed assets represents a group of assets of the same nature and with similar uses in the entity's activities.
	IAS 16 "Tangible assets" [10, pct. 29]	An entity must choose either the cost model in paragraph 30 or the revaluation model in paragraph 31 as its accounting policy and must apply that policy to an entire class of property, plant and equipment.

Source: developed by the authors based on the listed standards

From the information presented, the following moments related to the evaluation of fixed assets can be deduced, according to NAS "Intangible and tangible fixed assets" and IAS 16 "Tangible fixed assets". The initial and subsequent valuation of assets is based on common essential principles, but with differences in approach specific to each standard. In terms of initial valuation, both NAS and IAS 16 emphasize the importance of the costs of acquiring or creating an asset, with some differences in the details of application. Subsequent valuation, on the other hand, involves two distinct accounting models: the cost-based model and the revaluation model, both of which have a significant impact on financial reporting. The choice between these models must be consistent across the entire asset class, which reflects the importance of a clear and consistent accounting policy. Thus, the correct and consistent application of these standards contributes to a faithful and transparent image of the values of fixed assets in the entity's financial statements.

Conclusions

Following the research, it can be concluded that although the national regulations of the Republic of Moldova are largely aligned with international good practices, there are still significant differences regarding the implementation details of the principles of recognition and evaluation of fixed assets. Thus, the authors emphasize the continued importance of the process of harmonizing national accounting standards with international ones, to ensure better transparency and consistency in the financial reporting of entities.

Therefore, the conclusions of the research on the accounting of fixed assets are:

- The authors emphasize that the current accounting regulatory framework in the Republic of Moldova is built on the basis of Directive 2013/34/EU and the International

Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), reflecting a substantial alignment with international standards. Through the analysis of this framework, the research of local realities in the accounting treatment of fixed assets, highlighting the complexity of adapting national legislation to ensure compliance with international requirements. This contribution provides a clear insight into the process of normative integration.

- The authors' analysis of national legislation (Civil Code, Fiscal Code, Accounting and Financial Reporting Law, NAS "Intangible and Tangible Assets") and international standards (IAS 16) highlights an essential convergence regarding the defining characteristics of fixed assets: sustainability, significant value and use in economic activity. The authors synthesize relevant definitions and criteria, highlighting not only conceptual alignment but also pragmatic differences that may influence accounting application in practice.

- The research explores the criteria for recognizing and evaluating fixed assets, highlighting the importance of applying general principles (such as prudence, accrual accounting and relative importance). By comparing IAS 16 and NAS, the authors highlight the differences in the value criteria and in the control approach, providing a clear guide to entities on the use of national and international regulations for a correct and unitary management of fixed assets.

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