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**FORMATION OF ADAPTIVE
INFRASTRUCTURE OF SMALL AND
MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES SUPPORT
FOR VULNERABLE SOCIAL GROUPS**

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Introduction and the aim of the research: in the early stage of the Ukrainian business formation the creation of institutions to provide service and support for small and medium-sized business structures was somehow an end in itself. It slightly depended on actual demands for their services from the side of concrete economic entities. It was considered, that the creation and development of such institutions would lay the foundations of the future integrated market infrastructure of the country. Social entrepreneurship is aimed at finding the effective mechanisms to solve social issues, lessen social tension and initiate the blurring of intersectoral boundaries. Social entrepreneurship is oriented to satisfy the needs of population, and, as a result, is able to perform some state functions while being in regular contact with it. Social and economic researches of specificity and perspectives of social entrepreneurship development in the Ukrainian context are essential for deepening knowledge about this phenomenon and creating the necessary empirical base for predicting the vectors of national economic development.

Hypothesis of the scientific research is based on the totality of scientific concepts and principles of entrepreneurship development, which give the proof of possibility to increase the effectiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises' activities by the improvement of its support, based on the development and implementation of the adaptive infrastructure model for social entrepreneurship support, using the improved and new mechanisms and institutions.

The aim of the research is to systematize and devise the methods of development and support of social entrepreneurship and to reveal its actual possibilities and limitations while accomplishing socially important activities.

The methods of the research: general methods of scientific knowledge, such as the methods of synthesis and analysis, methods of generalization and prediction, economic analysis, methods of statistics and cluster analysis, correlation of theoretical and practical aspects of the research.

The results of the research: the essence of the category "adaptive infrastructure of small and medium-sized enterprises support" was disclosed in the article. It was based on the comparative characteristics of main approaches to the notion of "adaptivity" with regard to the system of institutions of infrastructural support of small and medium-sized social enterprises activities. Also the conceptual model of formation of adaptive infrastructure of social entrepreneurship support was developed. It takes into account the requirements of all the interested parties, identifies the role and place of social business formations in the system of its institutions.

Conclusions: infrastructural support of the entrepreneurial activity it is the system of organization of different types, functional purposes and forms of property, united by the aim to create favorable conditions for the rational management of small and medium-sized entrepreneurial structures at different stages of their development. Considering this system not only as the totality of relations and connections between its elements, but also as an integral object, possessing a range of qualities and characteristics, specified by the properties and qualities of its separate elements and connections between them, we can regard it as the complex adaptive system.

Keywords: social entrepreneurship, adaptive infrastructure, small and medium-sized enterprises.

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**ФОРМУВАННЯ АДАПТИВНОЇ
ІНФРАСТРУКТУРИ ПІДТРИМКИ МАЛОГО
ТА СЕРЕДНЬОГО ПІДПРИЄМНИЦТВА
СОЦІАЛЬНО-ВРАЗЛИВИХ ВЕРСТВ
НАСЕЛЕННЯ**

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Вступ і мета дослідження: на ранніх етапах формування українського бізнесу саме створення інститутів підтримки та обслуговування діяльності малих і середніх підприємницьких структур було якоїсь самоціллю, перебуваючи в слабкій залежності від реального попиту на їхні послуги з боку конкретних господарюючих суб'єктів. Вважалося, що через створення та розвиток подібних інститутів по суті закладався фундамент майбутньої цілісної ринкової інфраструктури країни. Соціальне підприємництво націлене на пошук ефективних механізмів вирішення соціальних проблем, пом'якшення соціальної напруженості, ініціює розмивання міжсекторальних кордонів. Соціальне підприємництво орієнтоване на задоволення потреб населення і, як наслідок, здатне взяти на себе деякі функції держави, регулярно контактуючи з ним. Соціально-економічні дослідження специфіки і перспектив розвитку соціального підприємництва в українському контексті необхідні для поглиблення знань про це явище, створення необхідної емпіричної бази для прогнозування векторів розвитку національної економіки.

Гіпотеза наукового дослідження ґрунтується на сукупності наукових положень і принципів розвитку підприємницької діяльності, які обґрунтовують можливість підвищення ефективності та результативності роботи сектора малого та середнього бізнесу за рахунок вдосконалення його підтримки, заснованої на розробці та впровадженні моделі адаптивної інфраструктури підтримки соціального підприємництва, що передбачає використання вдосконалених і нових механізмів і інститутів.

Метою даного дослідження є систематизація і розробка методів розвитку і підтримки соціального підприємництва, виявити актуаль-

ні можливості і обмеження його при здійсненні соціально-значимої діяльності.

Методи дослідження: загальні методи наукового пізнання, такі як методи єдності аналізу і синтезу, методи узагальнення та прогнозування, економічний аналіз, методи статистики і кластерного аналізу, взаємозв'язку теоретичних і практичних аспектів дослідження.

Результати: на базі порівняльної характеристики основних підходів до визначення поняття «адаптивність» стосовно до системи інститутів інфраструктурного забезпечення діяльності малого та середнього соціального підприємництва розкрито сутність категорії «адаптивна інфраструктура підтримки малого та середнього підприємництва». Розроблено концептуальну модель формування адаптивної інфраструктури підтримки соціального підприємництва, що враховує вимоги всіх зацікавлених сторін, визначальну роль і місце громадських бізнес-об'єднань в системі її інститутів.

Висновки: інфраструктурне забезпечення підприємницької діяльності – це система організацій різних видів, функціонального призначення та форм власності, об'єднаних метою створення сприятливих умов для нормального господарювання малих і середніх підприємницьких структур на різних стадіях їх розвитку. Розглядаючи цю систему не лише як сукупність відносин і зв'язків між складовими її елементами, але і як цілісний об'єкт, що має низку властивостей і характеристик, обумовлених властивостями і якістю окремих його елементів і зв'язків між ними, можливо розглядати її як складну адаптивну систему.

Ключові слова: соціальне підприємництво; адаптивна інфраструктура; малий та середній бізнес.

Problem statement. Now it is important to solve the problem of formation of integral and adaptive infrastructure of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) support, which will respond timely and adequately to the dynamic changes in the external environment and create the institutions, which will provide the essential and sufficient services for normal functioning of business both at the national and regional levels. The SME sector plays an important role in the structure of modern economic relations. It is the powerful basis for the development of the economic system of the country. At the same time, despite the flexibility and adaptivity of such group of economic entities in the conditions of crises tendencies, this kind of business is the most vulnerable and needs the systemic and continuous work to be done from the side of authoritative structures in order to create the highest possible favourable conditions for its development. Nowadays the share of small business in Ukraine's GDP is about 20%, while the analogous indices of developed countries range between 50 and 70%. At the same time, the SME sector remains a highly competitive element, if it is based on the methods of stimulation for the benefit of the state and society, which are considered to be normal in the world practice. Such methods proceed from the idea that small business is the basis of the whole national economy.

The relevance of the research is determined by the necessity of studying of substantial structural changes of modern entrepreneurship, which plays the key role in the development of the market economy. Social entrepreneurship has a large value nowadays. It is based on the particular combination of social and economic effects and solving of social issues by the use of "entrepreneurial" means. Social entrepreneurship, as a new model of social-economic activity, restructures the context of modern country's economy both at macro- and microlevels. It is reflected in the following moments: 1) many attempts of state and charitable organizations demonstrate the insufficient level of responsiveness to the needs and interests of population, which quite often leads to the obtrusion of services and significant cost escalation; 2) significant part of public sector activity is more often considered as ineffective; 3) constant lack of monetary funds restricts the state capabilities. While financing the social sphere, the state gradually takes the position of a supervisor.

The analysis of recent publications and the unsolved part of the problem. The genesis of the scientific thought in the sphere of formation of the infrastructure of social entrepreneurship support, took place within the frameworks of the wide range of publications of our country's and foreign scientists.

By the end of the 1990's certain practical experience and theoretical material on social entrepreneurship was accumulated. At the end of the 20th – beginning of the 21st century, the first international peer-reviewed journals, specializing in the problem of social entrepreneurship, appeared. Also the

professional communities, which gathered scientists from different countries with the aim to contribute to the development of the research in the sphere of social entrepreneurship, were organized. It resulted in the increase of research works in this sphere and lead to the active process of institutionalization of the phenomenon itself. The first fundamental papers in the sphere of social entrepreneurship were the works of G. Dees [1], R. Dart [2], S. Shane [3], S. Venkataraman [4], G.S. Mort [5], J. Weerwardena [6], A.M. Peredo [7], M. MacLean [8], J. Mair [9] and I. Marti [10].

In Ukraine the bibliography in the sphere of social entrepreneurship is too small. The majority of these works are the articles and papers of descriptive and summarizing character, but the number of empirical researches is insufficient at the moment. Being the new sphere of research both in Ukraine and the world in general, social entrepreneurship is an attractive scientific direction for the representatives of different fields of knowledge. But the multiplicity of approaches blurs the boundaries of the research area, which determines the importance to systematize the scientific knowledge.

With the development of the researches in the sphere of social entrepreneurship, the focal point started to shift from the conceptual issues of the origin and existence of this notion to the operational and strategic issues of forming organizations, involved in social entrepreneurship. Gradually there appeared more and more works, in which a business-model was applied as a unit of analysis in the process of social entrepreneurship studying and in which the peculiarities of business-model forming in the sphere of entrepreneurship were observed. The works of A. Guclu [11], G. Dees [12], F. Perrini and C. Vurro [13], J. Mair and O. Schoen [14], K. Sommerrock [15] and W. Grassl [16] deserve special attention.

The aim of the research is to develop the system of formation of adaptive infrastructure of small and medium-sized social entrepreneurship support and main business-models as a structural element of a social entrepreneurship conception building.

The results of the research. An important requirement for the formation of the adaptive structure of the entrepreneurship support is the possibility to create an active feedback channel from final consumers of its services. This channel can be provided by the inclusion of the range of already existing and functioning institutions into its structure. But these institutions should be considered in its new capacity – as public communities of entrepreneurs, whose activity is aimed to provide the sustainable development of SMEs in modern conditions.

An important direction for improvement of the informational and consulting infrastructure of the SME support is to carry out the standardization of its services provided by the sectoral and functional principles. Such standardization will give an opportunity to get the range of advantages for each

of the interested parties. Because of that, the control system of the multisectoral consulting center should combine the elements of program-target and line-functional methods of management. It will ensure its higher adaptivity for the changing factors of the environment, increase the level of responsibility for the quality, observance of terms and budgets of the implementable projects.

Micro-financial organizations, guarantee funds and business incubators, which enter into the composition of the infrastructure of the SME support, are considered to be the economic entities themselves. It should be taken into account while evaluating the effectiveness of their functioning as an element of the adaptive infrastructure of the SME support. It becomes possible with the use of such criteria: the increase of effectiveness of the use of budgetary funds, which are appropriated for the development of the infrastructure and the increase of the economic and target (development in the area of the SME entities) effectiveness of these entities functioning.

Due to the necessity of coordination of infrastructure objects of the SME support with the glance to the Ukraine's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO), and also the regional specificity, it is reasonable to use the single management company by delegating certain functions to the existing object of infrastructure with the regional status, which will develop and implement the integrated standards and criteria for the effective work of objects of informational-consulting infrastructure of support, monitor their activities, work up the strategy of system development in general, and also to play the role of the connecting link between organs of state (municipal) governmental authorities and other infrastructure objects.

To the number of new institutions of the SME support should be added the institution of the business ombudsman. It exists in different countries all over the world, but in Ukraine it is still in the process of development. Forming of the interaction model, which will adequately respond to the circumstances of the environment, is needed nowadays. Such interaction model will involve the active consulting infrastructure (primarily informational-consulting centers) and special ombudsmen in order to achieve the significant synergetic effect, which will multiply the effectiveness of every single element of the infrastructure for the SME support.

Public organizations of entrepreneurs, because of their flexibility, self-sufficiency and high level of proximity to economic entities, get the possibility to respond promptly and effectively to the dynamic changes in the external macro- and mesic environment and to the transformation of entrepreneurship needs. It determines the necessity of their inclusion into the model of the adaptive infrastructure of the SME support and transferring of new functions of creating the positive environment for the SMEs with the simultaneous consideration of their interests.

The most needed kind of the SME support is the informational-consulting support. Actively working public organizations can significantly increase its quality and effectiveness, but it requires some changes to be implemented, for instance, broadening and improvement of its functions and powers in providing the informational-consulting support for SMEs. The level of demand of SMEs for consulting services on different issues of business activities is defined by their quality and cost, fixed by the state and municipal governmental authorities. They mainly finance the informational-consulting support in accordance with their powers within the frameworks of their programs. Because of that, the corresponding state and municipal governmental authorities should be included into the adaptive infrastructure model for the SME support. Their task should be to reveal and offer the priority forms and directions of the consulting support and determine the acceptable level of their cost characteristics.

Expert diagnostics of the social entrepreneurship state in the modern Ukrainian context gave an opportunity to reveal the following substantial moments: 1) social entrepreneurship as a kind of practice only starts to develop in Ukraine. The number of actually acting social enterprises is not big and usually they do not perceive themselves as those; 2) effective measures of state or public support of this movement are absent; 3) capacities of social entrepreneurship as the basis of the development of socially oriented business activity of population are not used; 4) the field of subject of social entrepreneurship is not determined and separated; 5) resource potential of social entrepreneurship development, in the experts' opinion, is concentrated on a certain segment of nonprofit organizations, the vector of development of which is directed at social aims. But the development of their business activity includes the possibilities to realize the entrepreneurial principles for the income creation and thus to increase the effectiveness of their mission. In the sphere of business such a combination, from the experts' point of view, is practically impossible, because the commercial principles are on a priority basis, and social orientation can act, at most, as socially responsible business.

The key problems and complaints, regularly received by the representatives of social entrepreneurship interests protection, are given in Fig. 1.

The conducted analysis of key problems of small and medium-sized enterprises with regard to the system of infrastructure of social entrepreneurship support, gave an opportunity to define the notion of adaptivity. It should be observed as a system property, which determines its capability to rebuild inner characteristics with the help of the range of predetermined rules and tools with the aim to ensure the acceptance and realization of effective administrative solutions in the conditions of dynamic changes of the inner and external environment of functioning, which allows to put the category of adaptive infrastructure of the SME support into practice and take it into account as a

separate system, management of which has such features as wholeness, integrity, flexibility, synergy, adaptability and cognition.

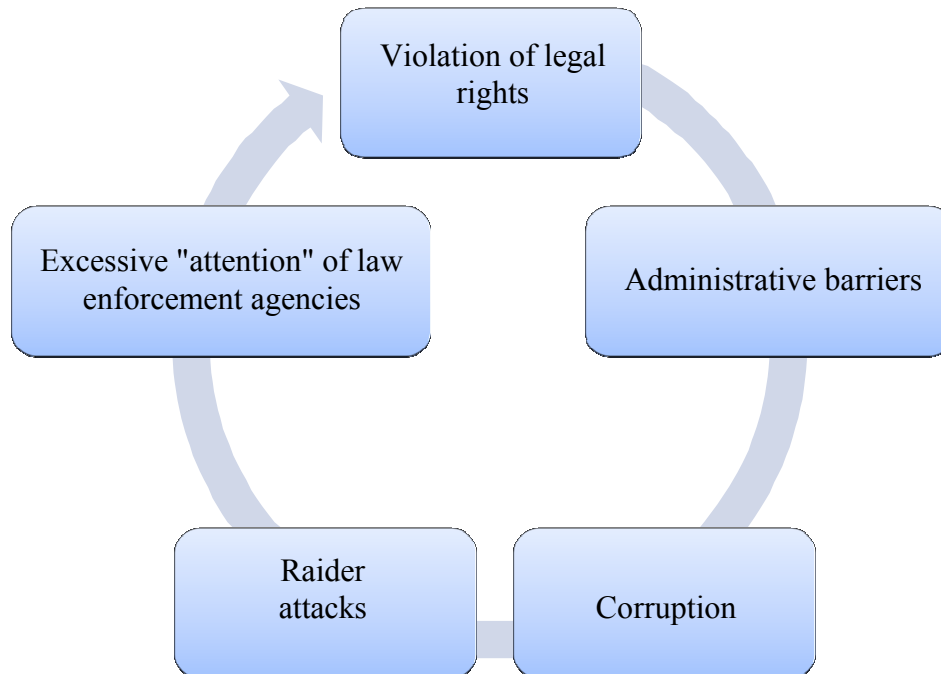


Figure 1. Key problems of small and medium-sized enterprises

The key interested parties in accordance with the system of adaptive infrastructure of the SME support are: the state as the main customer and initiator of support programs for social business entities, which is interested in the effective expenditure of funds, given for the support; vulnerable social groups as the consumers of products and services, produced by SMEs; business entities, interested in price-cutting and improvement of quality of services, provided by the infrastructure at different stages of their life-cycle; and, for the first time, public communities of entrepreneurs, interested in the improvement of legal and regulatory and infrastructure basis of the SME support and the improvement of entrepreneurial climate. Equal consideration of interests of the given parties while forming the adaptive infrastructure of the SME support, will ensure their long-term loyalty and result in high level of effectiveness of its functioning.

Such an approach gave an opportunity to substantiate the model of the adaptive infrastructure of the SME support, based on the typical requirements of the interested parties and key indicators of their satisfaction. Unlike others, this model includes such an interested party as the independent public organizations of entrepreneurs, which can provide only professional services to SMEs with the accordance with their needs. This model also takes into account macroeconomic conditions and regional specificity, which allows to improve the interconnection

between the governmental authorities and business, provide better coordination, flexibility and integrity of the totality of the infrastructure institutions of the SME support.

As a result, it is relevant to develop the most effective model of the adaptive infrastructure of the SME support with the participation of business communities, which directly interact with enterprises and provide the business services at all levels.

It should be noted that the infrastructure organization with 100% participation of governmental authorities, particularly in the case of budgetary funding of different directions of their activities (for example, trust funds or micro-financial organizations, providing the giving of microloans from the funds, received as asset contribution of their founders – governmental authorities), do not satisfy a requirement of flexibility and responsiveness because of strict regulations of budgetary procedures.

In their turn, public organizations of entrepreneurs and institutions, created and functioning with their participation and assistance, the main aim of which is to support SMEs in different aspects of activity, have an opportunity to respond promptly and reveal the problem fields in business sphere, and, from the point of view of practice, offer well-founded ways of solving the problems.

In such a way, the modern and relevant, from our point of view, model of the adaptive infrastructure of the SME support, should include both the totality of organizations and institutions of different forms of ownership and organizational and legal forms, and independent public organizations of entrepreneurs.

Both groups of participants, in such a case, act as the executors of support and development program of the SME sector. With the help of them, governmental authorities get an opportunity to provide business with all the necessary services (Fig. 2).

Thus, the adaptive infrastructure of the SME support, integrated with the leading business communities of the country, which function both at national and regional levels, has an opportunity to get the large-scale operational feedback from business entities. Such channel will provide the governmental authorities of certain level with the adequate information about problem areas of realization of entrepreneurial activities in the country.

New institutional mechanisms and tools of state support and regulation, created with the participation of public communities of business entities themselves, will give an opportunity to significantly increase the effectiveness of organizations, which enter into the composition of the business support infrastructure. Also they will give an opportunity to respond promptly to the changes in the external environment and timely generate the preventive actions of support realization, aimed at the development of the SME sector with the consideration of the existing market tendencies.

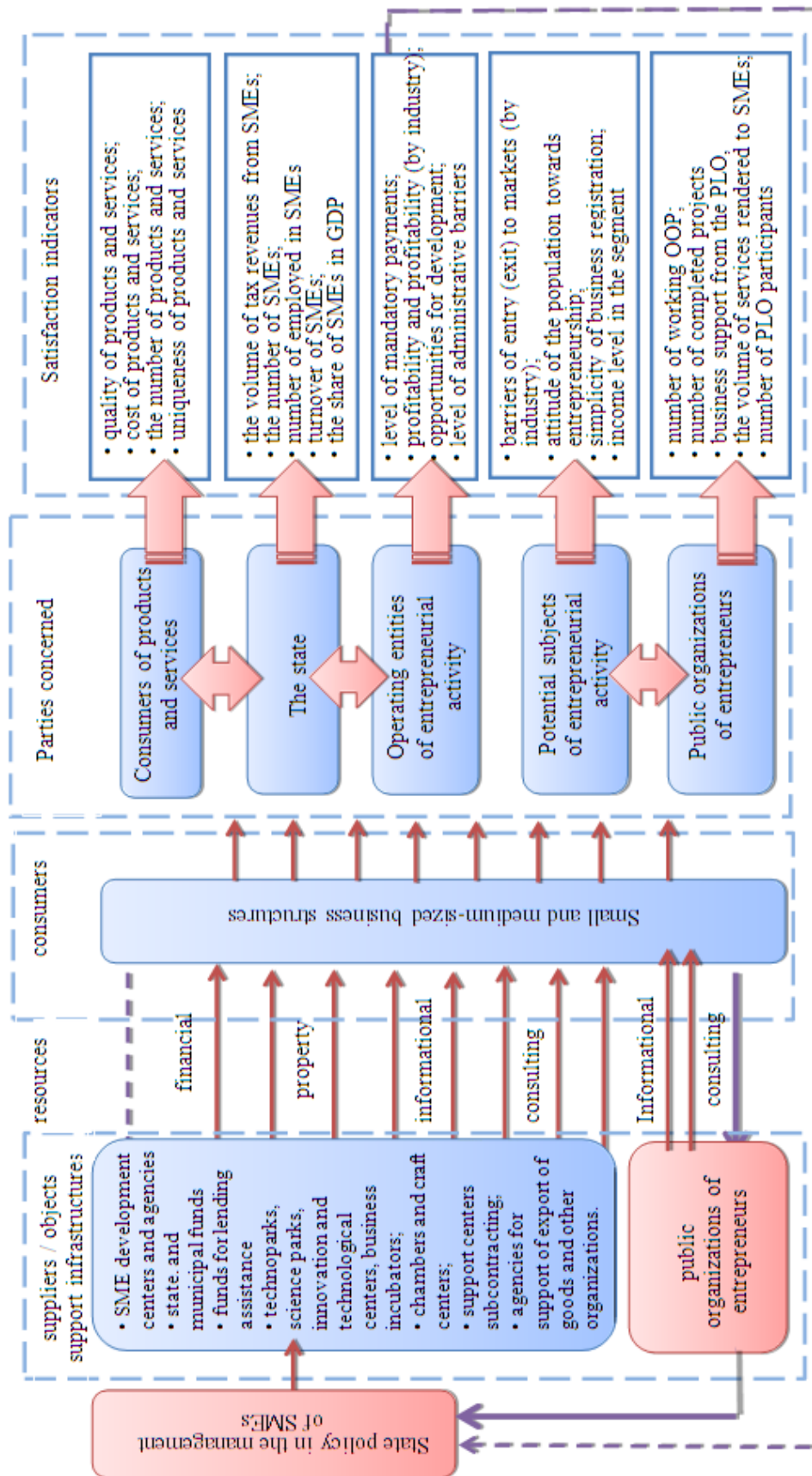


Figure 2. Conceptual model of the adaptive infrastructure of the SME support

Scheme of interaction of engineering process as an element of the adaptive infrastructure of the SME support with governmental authorities and other organizations in the sphere of service development by the SME entities, and also the complex of directions and methodical tools of realization of its functions of the informational-consulting support of SMEs, including the formation of the “portfolio” of commercial services, development and implementation of the informational-service system called “Electronic chamber of commerce and industry”, monitoring and elimination of violation of rights and legal interests of entrepreneurs. It will help to realize both traditional (expertise and certification, arbitration courts, mediation) and entrepreneurs support functions (creation and use of the integrated electronic service system, development of the service support system of foreign economic activities, the use of e-malls, ensuring of the effectiveness of entrepreneurs rights protection and advancement of business interests).

The use of the offered model gives an opportunity to optimize the forms of providing services (individual consulting, special training courses, receiving of analytical industry reports) and choose the modern priority forms and directions of consulting support of SMEs (accounting and taxation management, legal support, financial planning, recommendations for getting the state support, certification and licensing of goods and services, industry analytics). It will give an opportunity for the state and municipal governmental authorities, which finance and coordinate the informational-consulting support of SMEs within the frameworks of national, regional and municipal programs from the point of view of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, to determine the acceptable level of the provided services costs. It will allow to render services to a bigger number of entrepreneurs.

The use of the offered model also allows to determine the main directions for the improvement of informational-consulting centres work by the synthesis of program-target and line-functional management elements in the structure of their administration. It will give an opportunity to standardise their services not only by the industry and functional principles, but also by taking into consideration different stages of the SME lifecycle: to start the business – consulting on the search of viable business ideas and business plans preparation for their realization; for the acting SMEs – general analytics, individual strategic consulting and module standardised consulting on spheres of enterprises` activities, that will allow to increase the economic effectiveness of the centres work and also to satisfy the needs of external service consumers.

The main criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of the activity of the infrastructure of the SME support in the region are the following: functioning of microfinancial organizations, created with the participation of governmental authorities (the quality of management and operational risks, credit and liquid

risks), trust funds (the value of actual multiplication rate of sums of given loans to the value of the capital guarantee fund, the number of banks with low-quality portfolios in their general capacity, the level of past due payments according to the suretyship contracts, decision-making algorithm, the number of different kinds of support and banks, being the partners of the fund, giving loans on the surety of the trust fund, the number of innovative business entities to which the fund sureties were given, the capacity of the guaranteed credit resources to the innovative business entities), business incubators (at the beginning of the lifecycle – the number of entrepreneurs, having the access to the operational informational-consulting resource, qualification of employees, the number of innovative companies, availability of partners to support and develop the project, systems to monitor the activities of SMEs, located in the incubator and those SMEs, which have already left it; at the stage of business maturity – sustainable development of the SME entities in the region as a result of the target function implementation and evaluation of the financial effectiveness of the business incubator as a business entity). The use of the given criteria for the analysis of the effectiveness of microfinancial organizations functioning, trust funds and business incubators will give an opportunity to evaluate the economic and target (development in the region of the SME entities) effectiveness of these entities functioning, effectiveness of the use of budgetary funds, given for the development of the infrastructure, which can be used for the optimization of the budgetary funds distribution.

Conclusions and suggestions. Insufficient level of development of methodological basis of formulation and implementation of state policy to support the social sector of SME, dominating welfare mentality in society, decrease of motivation for the independent entrepreneurial activity among young people, the lack of stable loyal attitude to the profession of an entrepreneur in different social groups in Ukraine, followed by the disfunctionality of the economic mechanism of the country in general and the high level of uncertainty of the state and world economy development and the presence of crisis tendencies determine the unstable dynamics of growth of qualitative and quantitative indices of the SME activities in Ukraine.

The formation and evaluation of the effectiveness of functioning of the adaptive infrastructure of the SME support should be implemented with the consideration of interests of all the interested parties (stakeholders), including the public communities of entrepreneurs.

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