



## Editorial

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# Research as a weapon to combat obstacles to progress

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## La investigación como arma para combatir los obstáculos hacia el progreso

Our country, despite the political and social problems it has been facing over the last ten years, has maintained a stable level of economic growth; this is due to the fact that the free market, together with the large amount of supply that exists in all products or services, has generated an economic ecosystem that has allowed the subsistence of domestic economies of scale.

Despite the fact that Observatorio Produce (2024) shows us quite unfavorable results with the disappearance of two thousand four hundred SMEs from the manufacturing sector at the end of the year 2022, we can see that this type of small enterprises reappear again and again, generating that economic ecosystems remain alive and, consequently, that the economy remains active and more or less healthy in comparison with the rest of the countries of the Hispano-American region.

This phenomenon generates a double problem to be analyzed. The first issue that comes to our minds is the diversity of the sector; that is, whether the level of formalization of small enterprises in our country is high, and we know that our country has its economy based on SMEs, since, as we know, according to the latest measurement provided by the Peruvian State itself through the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI, 2024) through its official pages, as of July of the year 2024 we had more than three million small enterprises registered in our country; therefore, this is consistent with the data provided by América Economía (2015), which states that 99% of formal enterprises in Peru are SMEs.

But, on the other hand, the second problem is also found when we look at the other side of the coin, that is, if we put the numbers out in the open we will be able to see that, just as various economic analyses point out, bankruptcy percentages are as high as those of formalization, reaching alarming figures in 2023, where, according to the measurements, 75% of small enterprises go bankrupt in their first year, which generates an alert that is important for its monitoring. That is, if we have many enterprises becoming formal, but going bankrupt in their first year, this will also lead us to two possible scenarios: the first is that small entrepreneurs may come to feel that formalization is synonymous with bankruptcy; and the second possible scenario, possibly the most

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dangerous, is that in which small entrepreneurs formalize in order to obtain credit that, after their bankruptcy, remains unpaid.

Whatever the case may be, the important thing is to create a healthy economy, and the fact that enterprises are created massively but also go bankrupt in the same way can generate medium- or long-term problems, as has happened in Europe with the various economic bubbles that we were able to see during the past decade.

And the question is, what should we do in order to correct those problems that may lead us to a severe crisis of the commercial sector? Answering this question has led many researchers to test different economic, tax, legal and other types of formulas, with the purpose of correcting or, at least, reducing the possible risks that the phenomenon in question represents for our society.

Among all the formulas presented in various studies, perhaps we cannot choose one as the most efficient, at least not with the necessary certainty, but what we can and must do from academia is to propose small solutions that, taken together, manage to improve the situation of the sector, because it is our role, as members of academia and, therefore, as one of the very sources of law.

It is in this scenario that, for some years now, the idea has arisen of what the role of the various public and private bodies called upon to participate in the protection of these small enterprises should be in order to achieve greater economic stability, since societies require joint work for their common subsistence. And thus, both the State and chambers of commerce, universities, even more so public ones, have the duty to incorporate policies for the prevention of this type of crisis of small enterprises, as well as to establish the necessary tools to be able to guarantee their subsistence.

It is clear that the Peruvian State, to a certain extent, fulfills its role by establishing tax benefits, as in the case of the *Exporta Fácil* and *Importa Fácil* initiatives or the benefits for small enterprises established in Law No. 28015, also known as the Law for the Promotion and Formalization of Micro and Small Enterprises, in addition to generating support spaces through entities such as the National Institute for the Defense of Competition and the Protection of Intellectual Property (INDECOPI), which each year carries out collective trademark registration campaigns that may allow small entrepreneurs or some groups of them to seek greater international openness for their products or services, and thus obtain greater benefits and better economic conditions.

However, civil society often falls short with regard to its participation in promoting small enterprises. In the case of chambers of commerce, these always carry out a countless number of training courses for guilds or small entrepreneurs, generating spaces for them to acquire the necessary knowledge for better management of their businesses. However, reality shows us that traditional training is not interesting for them, because being absent from their businesses means not producing; therefore, despite the fact that the chambers generate the spaces, these are not really taken advantage of by small entrepreneurs, thus continuing the problem.

The same happens with universities that establish parameters of university social responsibility and generally focus on problems such as family violence, filiation or child support, leaving aside the possibility of also teaching low-income sectors how to produce, for example, yogurt or some simple product that generates permanent economic income, thus helping the most needy sectors to join the economically active population (EAP) and thus contribute one more grain of sand to the country's economy.

Thus, during recent years, all members of civil society have been opening their eyes and beginning to realize that we cannot form a better society if each one takes a different path. The only way to achieve a truly solid economy is if we all point in the same direction and walk together toward a better future, where we can achieve a society with an adequate quality of life, which is not a utopian or far-fetched idea, since if we think about the list of the happiest countries in the world, according to Expansión (2024), we can find that the first three places are Finland, Denmark and Iceland, which are located, according to the International Monetary Fund (2024), in positions 48, 37 and 108 by GDP level in the world, while Peru is located in position 51, that is, well above Iceland and quite close to Denmark.

So, why is it that on that list of the happiest countries we find ourselves in position 68, behind Honduras (position 61), Nicaragua (position 43) or Guatemala (position 42)? And the answer is actually very simple; this is because our society has fragmented to the point that Peruvian society, as such, has become a fiction, since small economic ecosystems of all kinds have been generated, each adapting to its own place, with its own characteristics and its own systems. This means that, more than a society understood as a single State, we are becoming a set of micro-societies that eventually interact with each other.

Because of this, these spaces, where researchers can make known their advances in the study of the social sciences, become a beacon that can illuminate the path for us to understand where we should go and thus achieve a bright future for our country.

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