

## Innovation as Entrepreneurial Drives in the Romanian Automotive Industry

**Authors :** Alina Petronela Negrea, Valentin Cojanu

**Abstract :** The article examines the synergy between innovation and entrepreneurship by means of a qualitative research on actors in the automotive industry in the Romanian southern region, Muntenia. The region is of particular interest because most of the industry suppliers are located there, as well as because it gathers the full range of key actors involved in the innovation process. The research design aims (1) to reflect entrepreneurs' approach to and perception on innovation; (2) to underline forces driving or stifling innovation in the automotive industry; and (3) to evaluate the awareness of the existing knowledge database and the communication channels through which it is transferred within and between innovation networks. Empirical evidence results from triangulation of three data collection methods: statistical data and other publicly available materials; semi - structured inter-views, and experiential visits. The conclusions emphasize the convergent opinion of the entrepreneurs about the vital role of innovation in their investment plans.

**Keywords :** automotive industry, entrepreneurship, innovation, Romania

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