

WEST UNIVERSITY OF TIMISOARA

DOMAIN: ACCOUNTING

SUMMARY OF HABILITATION THESIS

**Modern Accounting Practices Integrating Environmental Elements,
Tax Policies and Digital Transformation in Order to Improve the
Economic Performance**

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SUMMARY

In crafting this habilitation thesis, I have reflected upon my academic, scientific, and professional accomplishments over the span of 21 years of my academic career, while also outlining future development plans.

In a time of accelerated change and unprecedented challenges, accounting is at the crossroads of major transformations that are redefining its role in the economy and society and plays an increasingly important role in monitoring and reporting sustainability and social responsibility performance, thus contributing to the alignment of economic objectives with ethical and environmental ones. Technology, sustainability and the complexity of tax policies create a context in which the accounting profession is called upon not only to adapt, but to innovate and lead these transformations. The Habilitation thesis brings to the fore a few themes essential to the evolution of the future of accounting, from the integration of artificial intelligence and automation in financial reporting, to the impact of digitization on mental health and how technology is fundamentally changing the role of the accountant, fostering an economic environment where growth and sustainability go hand-in-hand, where accounting practices support environmental stewardship, and where data-driven decision-making aligns with the broader goals of society.

The aim of the thesis is to present the valences of accounting in a continuously changing, dynamic and challenging era, in which the role of the accountant goes beyond the boundaries of the classic record of transactions and financial reporting, becoming a central element in the process of making strategic decisions and evaluating organizational performance. Modern accounting practices, when integrated with environmental considerations, fiscal policies, and digital tools, have the potential to reshape not just individual organizations, but entire sectors and economies. We are moving beyond traditional financial metrics into a realm where sustainability, transparency, and accountability are key drivers of long-term success.

The thesis is divided into two main parts. The first part, titled "Scientific and Professional Achievements," explores two major areas of research: 1.1 "Digital Transformation and the Role of Accounting in the Era of Sustainability" and 1.2 "Accounting Policies and Economic Performance in a Global Context." The second part is dedicated to

"Career Development and Future Projections for a Successful Academic Career," which comprises two subchapters: 2.1 "Career Development through Engagement in Academic and Research Activities" and 2.2 "Future Directions and Goals in Academic and Research Endeavors."

The first area of research centers around a crucial aspect: digital transformation and how it has reshaped traditional accounting practices, addressing a core question of this thesis—how can accounting, through digital technologies and sustainable practices, enhance the economic performance of entities? In an era of rapid technological advancements and increasing environmental responsibilities, accounting has evolved beyond being a mere financial reporting tool; it has become a driver of strategic decision-making. The adoption of artificial intelligence and automation in financial reporting represents one of the most significant revolutions in the field. We are no longer talking about simple digitization of processes, but rather a profound transformation that redefines both the role of accountants and the relationship between data and business decisions.

This exploration highlights the dynamic nature of modern accounting, showcasing how the integration of digital technologies transforms it into a facilitator of sustainable growth and economic performance. The chapter emphasizes that accounting's role is shifting—from merely documenting the past to actively shaping strategic decisions that lead to a more resilient, efficient, and forward-looking economic landscape.

Moreover, environmental accounting becomes the link between innovation, transparency, and efficiency—a mechanism that extends beyond regulatory compliance and establishes itself as a strategic approach to creating value. This chapter emphasizes that accounting, in its modern form, has evolved into a catalyst for sustainable growth and economic resilience. The convergence of sustainability, digitalization, and innovative accounting practices plays a fundamental role in constructing a forward-looking, durable economic future, in which accounting shifts from recording the past to shaping and influencing the strategic directions of organizations.

In the second area of research of the habilitation thesis, we take a step back to consider the broader picture, analyzing how fiscal and accounting regulations can contribute to economic resilience, unlock new opportunities for companies, and shape sustainable development strategies. Our exploration moves beyond seeing accounting and fiscal policies

as mere tools of compliance; instead, they emerge as strategic mechanisms that support sustainable economic growth and enhance competitiveness on the global stage.

We delved into the harmonization of international regulations, the strategic roles of fiscal policies, and the profound impact that accounting decisions—often taken in seemingly isolated office settings—can have globally and explore, for instance, how the transition of the forestry processing industry towards a bioeconomy holds significant implications for both economic development and environmental sustainability. The analysis extended to corporate disclosures during the pandemic, examining how transparent reporting affected investor trust in times of great uncertainty. The research demonstrated that accounting and fiscal decisions, when combined with digital tools and a sustainability focus, can redefine industry practices, foster trust, and help businesses adapt and thrive in an evolving global context. Ultimately, this part of the thesis underscores that accounting practices, regulatory alignment, and sustainability are not isolated pillars but, rather, work in harmony to construct an economy fit for the challenges and opportunities of the future.

In a world where social responsibility and environmental protection have shifted from being mere options to essential obligations, modern accounting finds itself at the forefront of these concerns. Accounting practices today are no longer confined to financial record-keeping—they have evolved into powerful tools for driving transparency, fostering trust, and promoting sustainable change, arguments presented through our studies published in esteemed research journals. From adopting transparent reporting practices during the pandemic to encouraging corporate sustainability, every study presented in this habilitation thesis aims not just to describe the current situation, but to inspire a future where sustainability is integral to economic success.

The core goal of this habilitation thesis has been to establish a delicate balance between financial performance and sustainability, between regulation and innovation, and between the historical roots of accounting and its digital future. As the world moves rapidly toward a more digital and interconnected environment, accounting must transition from simply reporting the past to strategically shaping the future—supporting sustainable decision-making, ensuring compliance, and enabling companies to thrive within the constraints of social and environmental responsibilities.

Modern accounting is thus becoming a strategic engine for change, encouraging the integration of sustainability into core business practices and reimagining corporate governance to be more adaptive and forward-thinking. It embodies a shift in corporate paradigms—one where digital transformation, regulatory harmonization, and sustainability intersect to not only uphold accountability but also to drive economic resilience and growth. By embedding sustainability as a defining feature of corporate success, the habilitation thesis positions accounting at the very heart of a sustainable and thriving global economy, ultimately fostering an era where economic progress and environmental stewardship work in tandem.

The second part is dedicated to "Career Development and Future Projections for a Successful Academic Career, and, by its very nature, the teaching profession demands continuous development and growth, ensuring that educators can provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the field they teach. In today's global economic context, education and research are inseparable—each enriching the other. My career planning begun with establishing a balance between research and teaching activities, driven by a commitment to realistic ambitions, enthusiasm, and a solid scientific foundation. My career development is grounded in my achievements thus far, while also outlining my future goals and vision for academia. As I reflect on my journey and define future objectives, I remain guided by the milestones I've achieved and the strategic steps.

My future development plans in research are not only a reflection of my commitment to academic excellence but are also aligned with the latest trends and demands in higher education. As I advance towards the role of an accredited academic, leading doctoral theses, my focus will include topics related to accounting, environmental accounting, financial and non-financial reporting, digital transformation in accounting, sustainability, and taxation. To elevate the standard of academic activity, I believe in a holistic approach that consistently integrates innovative teaching methodologies aimed at capturing the interest of young researchers and fostering active learning. This includes regularly updating the curriculum, creating an inclusive and diverse learning environment, upholding academic integrity, and effectively utilizing modern technologies, including augmented reality, to enhance educational experiences.