

Assessing the Value of Financial Information for Business Decision-Makers: Evidence from Northern Portugal

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This study aims to understand the importance attributed to financial information by managers and entrepreneurs in Northern Portugal. To achieve this, a quantitative approach was adopted through a questionnaire survey, resulting in 1,433 valid responses. These were analysed using descriptive, inferential, and multivariate statistical techniques. The findings indicate that financial information is primarily used to meet legal requirements. However, managers and entrepreneurs also recognise its relevance as a management tool, placing particular value on financial statements in decision-making processes. Moreover, the analysis reveals that factors such as educational level, professional role, gender, company size, the source of financial information, and the perceived ease of interpreting financial statements significantly influence its perceived importance. By examining these variables, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of how financial information is perceived and utilised by business leaders in the region, while also identifying the key characteristics that shape its perceived relevance for supporting organisational needs.

Keywords: Accounting, Financial information, Decision-making process, Relevance/utility of financial information, Perception of managers and entrepreneurs. [ID 372]

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The Role of Higher Education Institutions in Fostering Entrepreneurship and Regional Collaboration: A Stakeholder Perspective from Setubal and Vidzeme

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This study explores stakeholder perceptions of the role of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in fostering entrepreneurship, knowledge transfer, and regional collaboration in two distinct European regions: Setubal (Portugal) and Vidzeme (Latvia). Using a quantitative, descriptive, and comparative methodology, data was collected through a structured questionnaire targeting academic and regional stakeholders. The analysis focused on two key dimensions: the relationship between HEIs and regional actors, and the relevance of international networks and cross-border cooperation. The results highlight a generally positive perception of HEIs' third mission, their contribution to entrepreneurship, and their engagement in knowledge and technology transfer. Stakeholders particularly valued the role of international collaboration in promoting innovation, mobility, and economic competitiveness. Differences between regions suggest varying levels of institutional maturity and strategic alignment. The findings reinforce the importance of stakeholder engagement in higher education and provide valuable insights for enhancing HEIs' regional impact.

Keywords: Higher Education Institutions, Stakeholders, Entrepreneurship, Knowledge Transfer, Regional Development. [ID 231]

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