



Assurance on Non-Financial Information – Challenges and Opportunities

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Abstract

In recent years, large companies have moved from the voluntary to the mandatory stage of reporting non-financial information on environmental, social and governance issues. Thus, in order to increase the degree of confidence in these reports, auditors can provide assurance engagements that contribute to a better image of the companies. The purpose of the paper is highlighted on two objectives, namely the first objective regarding the practices of an assurance engagement and the second objective related to the identification of existing research on assurance of the sustainability reports of non-financial information. For the first objective, based on the guidelines and recommendations issued by the professional bodies, the challenges that auditors have to meet in fulfilling their engagements were analyzed. The methodology used for the second objective was a bibliometric analysis using VOSviewer software, of a sample of 240 papers from publications indexed in the Web of Science – Clarivate Analytics database from the last 20 years. The results obtained showed that the number of published papers has had an upward trend in the last five years, with authors from all continents, but mainly from English speaking countries. The topics approached by the authors were shaped around the concepts of assurance, sustainability reports, governance and opportunities, following the bibliometric analysis resulting in a close connection between them. The basic conclusion that emerges is that this topic remains a subject of debate that still needs to be explored in order to identify all the challenges that auditors face and that would be possible solutions, both as a regulation and as an audit practice.

Kew words: non-financial information; sustainability; assurance; reporting; directive; social responsibility;

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