

WEST UNIVERSITY OF TIMIȘOARA
MANAGEMENT FIELD

**DE LA INTENȚIE ANTREPRENORIALĂ LA
PERFORMANȚĂ - O ABORDARE SPECIFICĂ
ECONOMIILOR EMERGENTE DIN EUROPA CENTRALĂ
ȘI DE EST**

**FROM ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION TO
PERFORMANCE – A FOCUS ON EMERGING ECONOMIES
IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE**

SUMMARY OF THE HABILITATION THESIS

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Summary

The habilitation thesis entitled “*From Entrepreneurial Intention to Performance – A Focus on Emerging Economies in Central and Eastern Europe*” synthesizes my academic and professional path after obtaining the PhD title in Management, underlining my scientific and teaching achievements, the original contributions brought to the field of **Management**, as well as my future development perspectives.

The thesis is placed in a context shaped by accelerated transformations - digitalization, green transition, and economic volatility - that directly influence the way entrepreneurial intention (EI) is converted into performance. In Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) emerging economies, these processes are further accentuated by institutional and cultural specificities, limited access to resources, and the dynamics of economic transition. The researched theme addresses a real need for regional contextualization of established theories and for formulating applicable models tailored to the entrepreneurial ecosystems in the region. My research has sought to answer the following fundamental questions: *What factors determine the shift from intention to action? How is financial performance measured and leveraged? What is the role of digital transformation in strengthening non-financial performance and competitive advantage?*

My entire academic career has unfolded at the West University of Timișoara (WUT), where I completed all stages of academic formation - Bachelor's, Master's, PhD, and postdoctoral studies - and where I gradually advanced through the academic hierarchy, from teaching assistant to associate professor. This continuity reflects not only loyalty to the institution where I was trained, but also my constant commitment to its development.

I have had the opportunity to take on academic and managerial responsibilities, such as coordinating the *Management en français* program, serving as Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration (FEAA) at WUT (2016–2020), and currently chairing the Oeconomica Timisiensis Foundation and coordinating the Romanian-British MBA program, run in partnership with the University of West London. In all these roles, I have sought to contribute to the international dimension of our programs and to foster connections between the university, the business environment, and society.

International experiences have represented defining moments in my career. I benefited from research stays at Université de Nice Sophia Antipolis, attended entrepreneurial training courses by Babson College, and in 2024, I was awarded a Fulbright-RAF Scholar Award at the University of Rochester, New York. Within this program, I had

the opportunity to collaborate with renowned professors, explore highly dynamic entrepreneurial ecosystems, and learn directly from international best practices. These experiences reinforced my belief that the internationalization of education and integration into global innovation networks are indispensable for the relevance of Romanian universities.

I have built a diverse scientific portfolio that includes six published books, over thirty articles in indexed journals (five of which in ISI-indexed journals with AIS>0), book chapters at prestigious publishing houses, and numerous conference presentations. My research has focused on three main directions:

- **Entrepreneurial Intention** – analyzing the psychological, cultural, and contextual factors that influence the formation and transformation of intentions into concrete actions;
- **Financial Performance** – investigating methods of measuring performance in emerging economies, with emphasis on data robustness and translating performance into firm value;
- **Non-Financial Performance and Digitalization** – examining how digital transformation supports green innovation, ESG integration, and organizational resilience.

I have transferred these results into teaching by developing modern courses, support materials, and interactive simulations, as well as by engaging students in extracurricular activities such as green entrepreneurship summer schools, business accelerators, and international competitions. I believe these experiences complement formal learning and prepare students for the challenges of the professional environment.

I structured the thesis to present a logical progression from the general context and professional trajectory to original scientific contributions and future research directions.

Chapter 1. Academic and Professional Path – presents the stages of my academic and professional career, managerial responsibilities, and international experiences that shaped my research profile.

Chapter 2. Scientific and Professional Achievements – synthesizes my contributions through publications, conference participation, extracurricular projects, and curriculum development. I demonstrated the ability to translate research outcomes into educational and managerial practices.

Chapter 3. Results and Original Contributions on the Transition from Entrepreneurial Intention to Performance in emerging CEE economies – the core of the thesis, structured in four subsections:

3.1. Determinants of Entrepreneurial Intention in CEE – analyzing motivations, culture, and psychological factors (perceived control, empathy, assertiveness), with published results in *Sustainability* (Heteş et al., 2025; Baciú et al., 2020), *Amfiteatru Economic* (Brancu et al., 2015), and *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences* (Brancu et al., 2012).

3.2. Economic Determinants and Methodology of Financial Performance Evaluation in the Context of Emerging Economies – investigating the relationship between economic-financial indicators, performance, and firm value, with published results in *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences* (Pantea, **Gligor** & Aniş, 2014), and *Proceedings of the 8th International Management conference* (Pantea, **Gligor** & Jurcuţ, 2014).

3.3. The Role of Digital Transformation in Strengthening Non-Financial Performance in Emerging Economies – highlighting the role of digitalization on ESG performance and green innovation, with articles in *Amfiteatru Economic* (Dinu et al., 2025) and *Electronics* (Buglea et al., 2025).

3.4. Impact of Scientific Contributions – documenting international recognition through citations and involvement in scientific/editorial boards, proving the relevance and transferability of the results.

Chapter 4. Future Development Directions – outlines my strategic vision on research and innovation, priority areas (organizational performance, entrepreneurship, digitalization, sustainability, academic leadership), and my intention to become a PhD supervisor.

Conclusions – summarizes the main theoretical and applied contributions, highlights the impact of my research on the Management field, emphasizing both my academic maturity and the relevance of my work for academia and society.

References – include the theoretical and empirical sources that underpinned my research, covering international literature, my own publications in prestigious journals, and key works in Management.

My original contributions can be summarized through three key messages:

- *Context matters* – the institutional and cultural specificities of CEE shape the relationship between intention and performance, requiring adaptation of existing theories;
- *Method matters* – selecting indicators and testing data robustness are critical for valid assessments in emerging economies;

- *Digitalization is transversal* – acting as a catalyst for performance, though its effects depend on organizational capabilities and inclusion policies.

Based on these results, I developed an integrated framework for analyzing the entrepreneurial trajectory, useful both for research and for managerial decision-making and public policy.

In the future, I aim to continue research along five major directions: organizational performance and competitiveness management, entrepreneurship and innovation, digital transformation and organizational impact, sustainability and circular economy, as well as academic development and research leadership. I aspire to obtain the qualification of PhD supervisor in Management, in order to contribute to the formation of a new generation of researchers and to extend the impact of my research on academia and the professional environment.

Concurrently, I will further enhance my professional development by engaging in advanced courses, specialized workshops, and international training programs, acknowledging that lifelong learning constitutes a fundamental requirement in the dynamic and evolving field of Management.

Through this habilitation thesis, I aimed to demonstrate my scientific and professional maturity, the international relevance of my contributions, as well as the capacity to create meaningful connections between research, education, and practice. I believe that my accumulated experiences, the results achieved, and my future research directions provide strong arguments for the awarding of the habilitation certificate and for assuming the responsibilities of PhD supervision in Management, coordinating research teams, and contributing to consolidating the West University of Timișoara as a hub of academic and innovative excellence.