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**ACCOUNTING ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION
INSTITUTIONS WITH FINANCIAL AUTONOMY**

522.02 „ACCOUNTING; AUDIT; ECONOMIC ANALYSIS”

Summary of the doctoral thesis in economic sciences

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CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH

Relevance of the research topic and importance of the problem addressed. In today's reality, defined by the speed of information and the complexity of global challenges, human capital represents the most valuable resource. For the Republic of Moldova, currently undergoing transformation and alignment with European standards, higher education is a fundamental pillar of sustainable development and European integration.

Public higher education institutions in the Republic of Moldova are undergoing a complex process of structural, normative, and financial reform, aimed at aligning with the standards of the European Education Area. This process requires the modernization of the regulatory framework and financing mechanisms, with the main objective of consolidating the quality of education.

The transition to financial autonomy has redefined not only the accounting system but also the mechanisms of organization, administration, and financial reporting of university resources. This reform has marked the transition from cash-based accounting, specific to public entities, to the NAS, specific to the private sector. From the accounting perspective, the reform generated expectations of significant opportunities to improve financial transparency and strengthen managerial accountability in managing financial resources, but it also revealed shortcomings and deficiencies – both in terms of the significance and organization of accounting processes, the experience of applying NAS, and the human resources involved. These deficiencies have affected and continue to affect the capacity of higher education institutions to efficiently implement accounting practices and ensure the quality of financial information. The expectations of this accounting reform were to modernize financial reporting practices in higher education. During implementation, it was found that the accounting system based on NAS reflects the situation of public higher education institutions in a way that is less suitable.

Thus, the reform process requires significant adaptation and may be characterized as long-term. Nevertheless, the strategic direction remains oriented toward harmonization with international and European financial reporting standards for the public sector, which involves strengthening the accounting methodological framework, streamlining reporting processes, and promoting a new accounting culture based on quality, accountability, and transparency in financial reporting.

The relevance and importance of the research topic derive from the need to formulate and propose recommendations to solve the accounting problems identified and to propose a general framework adapted to the retention of accounting in public higher education institutions with financial autonomy.

Description of the situation in the field and identification of research problems. Accounting in public higher education institutions with financial autonomy is a topic increasingly found in the specialized literature of the Republic of Moldova. The first approaches can be found in the research of E. Taban (2009) and T. Tuhari & E. Taban (2013), where these authors addressed issues of transitioning public institutions to accounting based on NAS.

Later, the issue was addressed by both local and foreign scholars: Grigoroî L., Mihaila S., Bădicu G., Taban E., Tiron-Tudor A., Blidişel R., Drăguşin C. P., Paschia (Dincă) L., Brusca I., Labrador M., Agasisti E., Arnaboldi M., Boitier M., Rivière A., Aghion P., Broadbent J., Cropper P., Cook R., Modell S., Granof M.H., Platt D.E., Vaysman I., Kaplan R.S., Atkinson A.A., Anthony R.N., Young D.W., Parker L.D., Guthrie J., Marginson S. and Hoque Z.

International research is largely focused on the adaptation of university accounting systems to IPSAS principles, which, however, are not currently applied in the Republic of Moldova.

The accounting reality of public higher education institutions demonstrates fundamental methodological and regulatory shortcomings: ambiguities in recognizing and recording revenues, lack of clarity in accounting for public assets regarding delineation, amortization, deficiencies in cost calculation and allocation, lack of methodological consolidations, and the underdeveloped state of management accounting. Accounting policies are treated superficially, inadequately reflecting institutional specificity, while the need to introduce new modern reporting tools is becoming increasingly evident.

The aim of the research is to investigate the main accounting issues in public higher education institutions, with emphasis on identifying dysfunctions, analyzing their causes, and formulating solutions to optimize accounting processes and increase financial transparency. To achieve this aim, the following **research objectives** were set:

- diachronic analysis of the evolution of accounting in public higher education institutions in the Republic of Moldova and assessment of its functionality as a decision-support tool;
- investigation of the interdependence between the degree of financial autonomy and the accounting paradigm of public higher education institutions;
- analysis of the adequacy of the regulatory framework to the realities of public higher education institutions in order to substantiate a reconfiguration of accounting for these institutions in the Republic of Moldova;
- critical evaluation of the way financial transactions are recorded in higher education institutions, including differences between budgetary and extra-budgetary financing;
- exploration of ambiguities and inconsistencies in the accounting treatment of assets of higher education institutions and systematization of these treatments according to their regulatory basis;
- development and testing of indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of accounting policies in public higher education institutions, with the aim of formulating optimization recommendations;
- determining the limits of managerial accounting and cost calculation methods in carrying out academic missions and developing a conceptual-methodological model for allocating and managing costs by calculation object;
- analysis of the opportunity for implementing integrated and sustainability reporting in public higher education institutions, to strengthen transparency and accountability.

Research Hypothesis assumes that the main source of accounting issues in public higher education institutions with financial autonomy is the regulatory dualism: applying a regulatory framework specific to private law entities against the background of governance specific to the public sector, which generates inconsistencies in accounting treatments and reduces the relevance of financial information.

Research Methodology is based on a mixed approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods to achieve a comprehensive understanding of accounting in public higher education institutions in the Republic of Moldova.

Qualitative research was carried out through: systematic review of national and international scientific literature, consultation of specialized databases (Web of Science,

ResearchGate, ProQuest, Google Scholar, National Bibliometric Instrument); multi-level comparative analysis of the regulatory framework: institutional, national, European, and international; semi-structured interviews with chief accountants, financial-accounting specialists, and pro-rectors with economic responsibilities; focus groups with academic staff in administrative positions and financial-accounting personnel.

Quantitative research was conducted through an online questionnaire, created on the Google Forms platform, consisting of 21 questions formulated in various formats (closed, open, Likert-type scale, multiple-choice). The questionnaire was distributed via institutional emails and social networks, obtaining complete responses from 75 respondents from all 12 public higher education institutions in the Republic of Moldova, during December 2024 – April 2025. Data were processed using descriptive and econometric analysis (multiple linear regression model).

The important scientific problems solved lie in identifying and proposing a set of methodologies for addressing persistent accounting issues in public higher education institutions. The main contributions include: accounting judgments and methodological algorithms for recording complex financial transactions and categories of patrimonial assets, a methodological concept for the calculation and allocation of university costs, which resolves dysfunctions of inefficient allocation and lack of transparency, ensuring a fair distribution of public funds, a system of indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of accounting policies, anticipating risks of inefficiency and erroneous reporting, the application concept of the *National Public Sector Accounting Standards (SNCSP)*, which argues for avoiding correlation problems between accrual accounting and budgetary execution principles.

The scientific novelty and originality of the research consist in extending the scope of accounting studies in public higher education institutions beyond the framework of budgetary accounting, through the following contributions:

- a comprehensive taxonomy of accounting issues based on causal analysis of the context and influencing factors, surpassing a merely descriptive and fragmented approach;
- the conceptualization of an econometric model for quantifying the influence exerted by different modes of management accounting organization and certain organizational constraints on the perception score regarding the impact of digitalization on management accounting;
- a logical model of professional accounting reasoning in the form of a methodological algorithm for recording complex transactions, which ensures faithful representation of financial performance and reduces the risk of errors and misinterpretation;
- an integrated methodological concept adapted to cost accounting in public higher education institutions in the Republic of Moldova, enabling the resolution of this problem.
- the integrated system of indicators for the multidimensional evaluation of the effectiveness of accounting policies, providing a tool for strengthening the quality of financial information and transitioning toward performance-oriented accounting.

The theoretical significance of the thesis lies in the consolidation and development of the methodological basis of accounting specific to public higher education institutions and in substantiating a concept for applying international practices based on IPSAS. The theoretical contribution is manifested through: critical evaluation of the existing theoretical-normative framework and assessment of the applicability and limitations of the NAS in relation to the

university context, theoretical substantiation of management accounting, demonstrating its necessity and highlighting its practical foundations, with emphasis on cost calculation, development of a conceptual model of cost calculation adapted to university activities, grounded in international experience and multidisciplinary approaches, elaboration of the concept of efficient accounting policies through the definition of their characteristics, substantiation of a set of indicators for evaluating effectiveness.

The applied value of the research lies in: offering practical solutions for accounting revenues, expenditures, and costs arising from various sources of financing in the form of methodological algorithms for accounting records, which can serve as a reliable guide for recording and reporting a faithful position and financial performance of institutions; the application of an econometric tool capable of testing hypotheses and identifying which organizational factors accelerate or hinder the positive perception of the transformation of management accounting under the impact of digitalization; designing accounting algorithms for patrimonial assets received as property rights, assets under economic management, book collections, and other direct elements and/or indirect elements related to patrimony, which belong to higher education institutions, elaboration of accounting policies and presenting a new image of the economic reality of these institutions, proposing the application of the concept of efficient accounting policies for the transfer of the regulatory framework from a mere registration procedure to a management and governance tool; designing a cost calculation methodology specific to public higher education institutions, which supports institutions in efficiently implementing the regulatory framework for financing student costs and becoming efficient, transparent, and sustainable institutions, capable of operating in a competitive and autonomous environment.

The main scientific results submitted for defense lie in:

- theoretical and methodological substantiation of accounting reasoning and methodological algorithms for recording transactions from various complex sources of financing, contributing to the improvement of accounting policies, increasing the degree of transparency and credibility of information in the decision-making process;
- methodological clarification of accounting judgments regarding the recording of asset categories specific to the patrimony of public higher education institutions, to resolve ambiguities generated by the dualism of the normative framework, contributing to legal compliance and adherence to principles of good financial governance;
- substantiating the reconfiguration of accounting in the context of the transition to SNCSP for alignment with the EU *acquis communautaire* and transparency requirements consistent with good European practices, which will contribute to the modernization of financial management and responsible management of resources;
- designing the methodological concept of cost calculation and allocation per student, per study program, and per activity in public higher education institutions, for application in data-driven management, efficiency, and sustainability, which would allow the substantiation of educational policies and equitable and transparent financing, increase public accountability, ensure efficient resource management, evaluate performance, and justify tuition fees;

- addressing sustainability standards in the real context of public higher education institutions for voluntary application, providing a new perspective on how institutions can integrate them through integrated reporting.

Implementation of Scientific Results. The author's recommendations and suggestions regarding the scientific results of the research were implemented by the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, the University of Medicine and Pharmacy „Nicolae Testemițanu”, „Bogdan Petriceicu Hașdeu” State University of Cahul and the Ministry of Finance.

Approval of Research Results. The research results were presented and approved at 10 national and international scientific conferences and symposia organized in the country and abroad. Moreover, the research was recognized both nationally and internationally, being awarded at creativity and innovation fairs: International Exhibition of Innovation and Technological Transfer „Excellent Idea”, Chișinău, Republic of Moldova, 2024 – First Prize and Gold Medal, European Exhibition of Creativity and Innovation „Euroinvent”, Iași, Romania, 2025 – Third Prize and Bronze Medal.

Publications on the Thesis Topic. The research results were published in 14 scientific papers, totaling 18,15 author's sheets, including: 1 textbook chapter, 10 papers published in specialized scientific conferences in the Republic of Moldova and abroad, and 3 articles in specialized profile journals.

Volume and Structure of the Thesis. The thesis includes: annotation romanian, english, and russian, introduction, the list of tables, the list of figures, the list of abbreviations, three chapters, conclusions and recommendations, and a bibliography of 327 sources. The content is presented on 139 pages of main text, 19 tables, 26 figures, 2 formulas, and 17 appendices.

Keywords: public higher education institutions, financial autonomy, university revenues, management accounting, cost calculation, accounting policies, financial reporting, integrated and sustainability reporting, university management, financial transparency, academic governance, national accounting standards, IPSAS.

CONTENT OF THE THESIS

In the **Introduction**, the actuality and relevance of the research, the importance of the scientific issues addressed in alignment with the purpose, objectives, and methodology of the applied research are argued, as well as the theoretical and practical value of the proposed scientific results as solutions to the problems addressed.

In Chapter 1, „**The evolution and functionality of accounting in public institutions of higher education with financial autonomy**”, an analytical approach is undertaken regarding the transformation of accounting in the university sector.

In the context of implementing financial autonomy in public higher education institutions in the Republic of Moldova, their accounting underwent a major transformation, migrating from a budgetary accounting system, focused on cash accounting, budget execution, and control of public spending, to a system based on accrual accounting, built on the model of private sector entities and governed by the NAS. Under these new conditions, the cash accounting system was incompatible with managerial responsibilities, undermining financial autonomy. The transition to NAS was meant to provide public higher education institutions with the informational tools necessary to exercise their autonomy in an efficient and responsible manner.

The analysis of current accounting practices in public higher education institutions reveals that although the accounting regulatory framework has been reformed, managerial culture has not progressed, and in many cases, accounting has been and still is approached as a formal compliance exercise. Institutions have continued and still continue to oscillate between the restrictive requirements of budgetary reporting and NAS.

The evolution of the accounting regulatory framework applicable to public higher education institutions with financial autonomy in the Republic of Moldova, presented in Figure 1, can be characterized as an inconsistent and fragmented path, marked by legislative instability that generated uncertainty and hindered the consolidation of stable accounting practices. The repeal in 2014, after only one year of use, of some NAS and their immediate replacement with new ones, forced educational institutions to try to quickly adapt to the new paradigm, even if the old ones had not been fully assimilated. Moreover, the new standards were also subject to amendments, including repeated ones, which, although intended to correct omissions, created a lack of predictability for accountants and made the consistent application of accounting policies difficult.

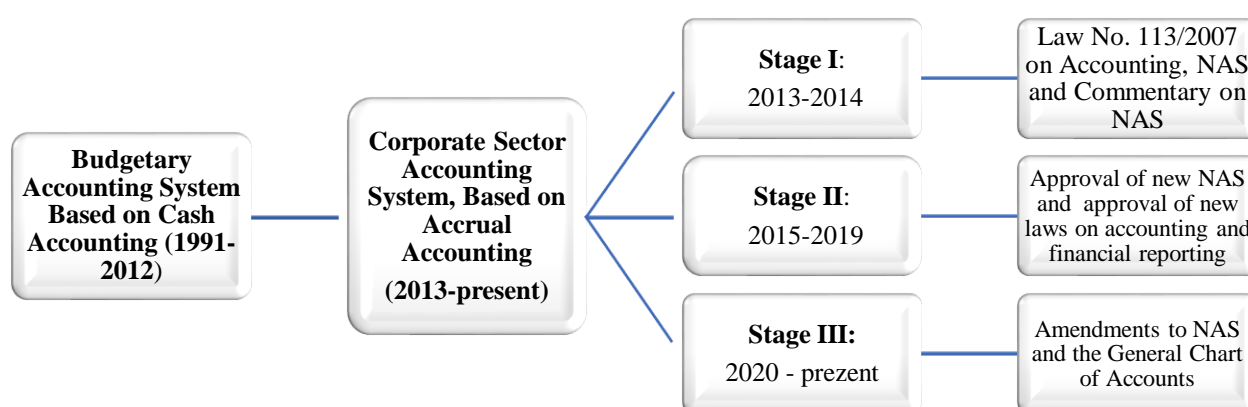


Fig.1. The evolution of accounting in public higher education institutions in the Republic of Moldova (1991–present).

Source: prepared by the author.

The difficulty in implementing and applying the NAS has persisted in their practical transposition within an environment characterized by inertia and resistance to change. The variety and complexity of activities in higher education institutions, in relation to the NAS, require and demand the issuance of judgments based on professional reasoning – something with which the majority of managers and accountants were not and still are not familiar. In NAS-based accounting, the accountant is no longer merely an executor of rules, but a professional who must analyze the economic, legal, and institutional context of each transaction to ensure compliance, relevance, and reliability of financial information – in other words, they must apply professional judgment. Table 1 presents the dimensions of professional judgment based on the accounting system applied.

Table 1. The dimension of professional judgment in the application of accounting systems

Budgetary accounting system	Accounting system based on NAS
Strict compliance logic – strict application of budgetary regulations without interpretation.	Flexible economic logic – adaptable economic reasoning, with flexible interpretation of the legal framework depending on economic realities.
Control-oriented judgment – accounting decisions aim at budgetary transparency and control of public spending.	Performance-oriented judgment – accounting decisions aim to present a true and fair view and relevant information for users.
Annual/budgetary perspective – focus on budget execution within the current financial year.	Long-term perspective – strategic vision aligned with the principle of activity continuity and impact over multiple periods.
Priority of legality – full compliance with budgetary rules and expenditure authorization requirements.	Priority of relevance – providing reliable, comparable, and useful information for decision-making.
Uniform interpretation – identical application of regulations in all similar situations.	Contextual interpretation – adapting principles to the specifics of each concrete economic situation.
Reporting objective – demonstrating the correct and legal use of public funds.	Informational objective – presenting a complete picture of the institution’s financial position and performance.

Source: prepared by the author.

Starting from the concept of financial autonomy described in the regulatory framework (Figure 2) and the approaches found in scientific publications, I have developed an integrated definition of the concept, as follows: *university financial autonomy* represents the institutional capacity to manage resources independently and strategically in order to optimize academic performance and achieve excellence objectives. This autonomy is exercised within a balanced system of responsibility and transparency, adapted to the particularities of the national and institutional context, and oriented toward long-term sustainability.

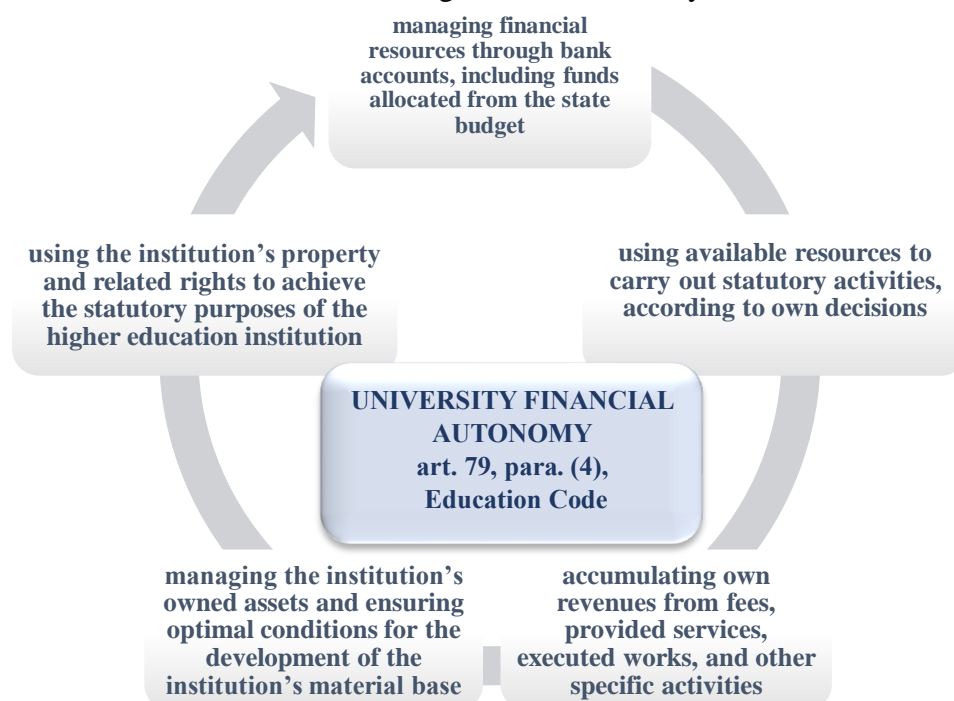


Fig. 2. Components of university financial autonomy

Source: prepared by the author

Financial autonomy and the accounting system are in a relationship of mutual causality and consolidation. Increased autonomy creates pressure for the adoption of a more advanced accounting system, which in turn facilitates the exercise of more advanced financial autonomy. Public accountability mediates this relationship, as greater autonomy implies pressure for transparent and efficient management. Thus, a virtuous circle is established, in which an adequate accounting system generates transparency, which strengthens trust and the legitimacy of autonomy, and autonomy facilitates institutional efficiency and performance. The key point in the Republic of Moldova has been the situation in which a high – performance accounting system was adjusted to a system of limited financial autonomy, and the tensions and pressures within the normative duality led to a reactive structuring of the accounting system (Figure 3).

The elements and functions of management accounting – indispensable for cost analysis, efficient use of resources, and support for managerial control – are insufficiently integrated into the current accounting and reporting system. This neglect perpetuates a predominantly formal accounting approach, to the detriment of a management system oriented toward performance, sustainability, and institutional efficiency.

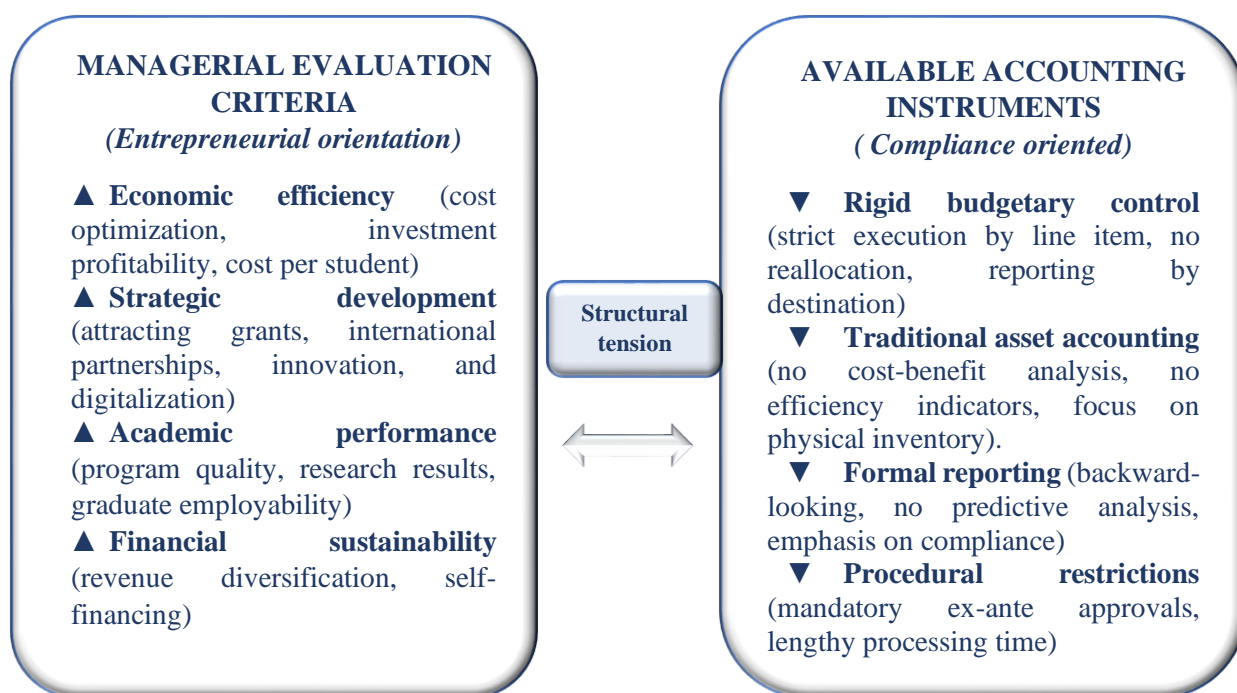


Fig. 3. Duality of the university financial - accounting system

Source: prepared by the author

The budget preparation process in local higher education institutions is characterized by structural and functional fragmentation, being built from accounting-derived information but lacking direct and coherent integration with the accounting system. In the absence of structural and automated connections, frequent desynchronizations occur between accounting data and budgetary cycles, leading to informational inconsistencies, difficulties in monitoring budget execution, and limited operational efficiency. Moreover, the process of collecting and processing accounting data for budgetary purposes is carried out, in most cases, manually or through non-automated import-export procedures, increasing the risk of errors, delays, and the use of outdated

information. This limited approach affects higher education institutions' ability to implement real-time budget control and benefit from prospective decision support based on reliable and up-to-date data. Consequently, managerial flexibility is reduced, additional resources are consumed, and the potential for strategic adaptation to changes in academic, social, and economic environments is diminished.

In public higher education institutions, the interconnection between accounting policies and the financial-accounting system is deficient, affecting coherence and the efficiency of financial processes. Accounting policies, which should guide the configuration and functioning of financial software systems, are not treated as active management tools. This separation leads to errors, inefficiencies, limits managerial transparency, the ability to allocate resources efficiently, and the attraction of competitive financial resources. In the context of evolving financing tied to performance, and the EU accession process, aligning accounting policies with international systems is essential for long-term institutional sustainability.

The accounting information system in public higher education institutions in Moldova remains marked by a fundamental split between financial accounting (compliance-oriented with budgetary execution and control) and management accounting (almost absent). This fragmentation creates an informational void that affects budget substantiation, cost-benefit analysis, and undermines strategic decision-making. Unlike the national framework, international standards (IPSAS/EPAS) promote a unified information architecture, essential for transparency and performance. This highlights the need for reforming the accounting system in Moldovan public higher education institutions by eliminating accounting duality, integrating management accounting, and aligning with international standards for the public sector.

Chapter 2, **„Complexities and projections regarding accounting in public higher education institutions with financial autonomy”** analyzes the practical dysfunctions of the accounting system resulting from the application by public higher education institutions of accounting regulations designed for private sector entities. It highlights a wide range of identified issues and proposes concrete solutions.

The financing of public higher education institutions comes from a mix of sources, each with its own allocation and usage rules. Their diversity is presented in Figure 4.

Understanding how funding works is essential for shaping a complete picture of an institution's financial resources and for designing a relevant financial information system. The way financial resources are recorded, tracked, and reported is crucial for efficient management and sustainable university governance.

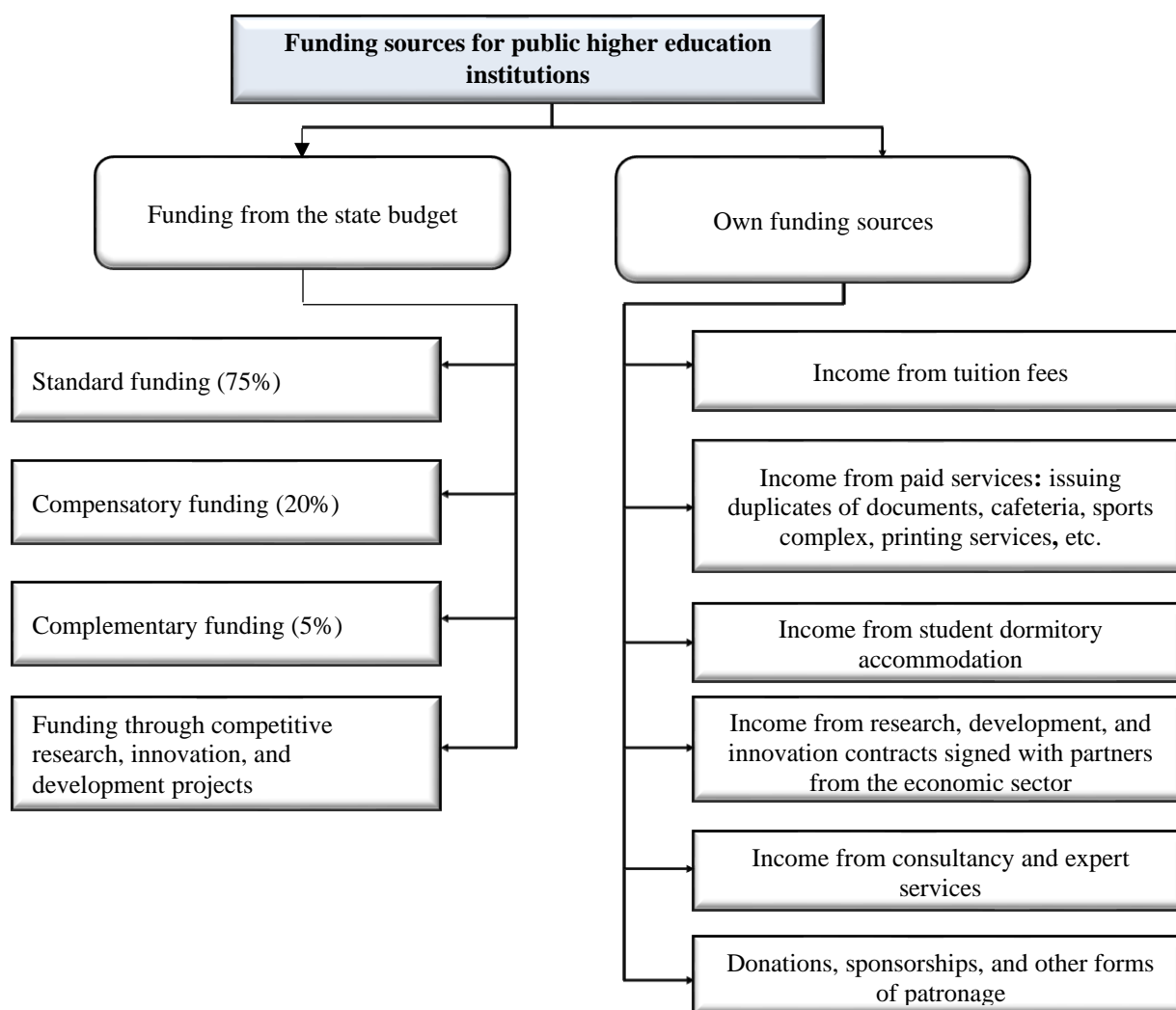


Fig. 4. Funding sources of public higher education institutions in the Republic of Moldova
Source: prepared by the author based on the regulatory framework

Understanding how funding works is essential for shaping a complete picture of an institution's financial resources and for designing a relevant financial information system. The way financial resources are recorded, tracked, and reported is crucial for efficient management and sustainable university governance.

The main source of funding for most public higher education institutions is the state budget (Table 2).

Table 2. Structure of funding for public higher education institutions

Public Higher Education Institutions	2024					2023				
	State Budget Allocations (2024)		Own Revenues (2024)		Total, thousand lei	State Budget Allocations (2023)		Own Revenues (2023)		Total, thousand lei
	thousand lei	%	thousand lei	%		thousand lei	%	thousand lei	%	
ASEM	91369,2	53,22	80302,0	46,78	171671,2	90671,9	52,22	82976,8	47,78	173648,7
UTM	416002,5	69,50	182590,0	30,50	598595,5	408925,5	67,10	124933,5	32,90	609409,4
USM	404360,3	65,44	213581,1	34,56	617941,4	451004,6	70,82	185822,6	29,18	636827,2
USARB	56323,94	66,33	28584,22	33,67	84908,16	53034,9	62,23	32184,17	37,77	85219,26
UPSC	148317,2	71,48	59160,0	28,52	207477,2	115949,5	62,90	68135,7	37,01	184085,2
AMTAP	67378,2	85,16	11744,3	14,14	79122,5	66669,2	85,14	11640,1	14,86	78309,3

Source: prepared by the author based on budget data available on the official websites of public higher education institutions

The analysis of the national regulatory framework reveals that, although budget allocations are apparently classified as revenue, they do not fall under the scope of the NAS „Revenue” standard. The NAS does not regulate this aspect, but public higher education institutions are required to apply the NAS on revenue by associating revenues with subsidies, NAS „Equity” and liabilities. Therefore, budget allocations must be treated as subsidies, and applying the NAS “Revenue” standard to account for them is incorrect. From the NAS perspective, the term “subsidy” is more appropriate to describe budget allocations for public higher education institutions, as it better reflects the nature, purpose, and accounting treatment of such allocations. However, the IPSAS framework, based on international best practices, offers a more nuanced approach tailored to the specifics of the public sector. IPSAS requires that, as a first step, each revenue stream be classified into one of two categories: exchange transactions and non-exchange transactions (Figure 5).

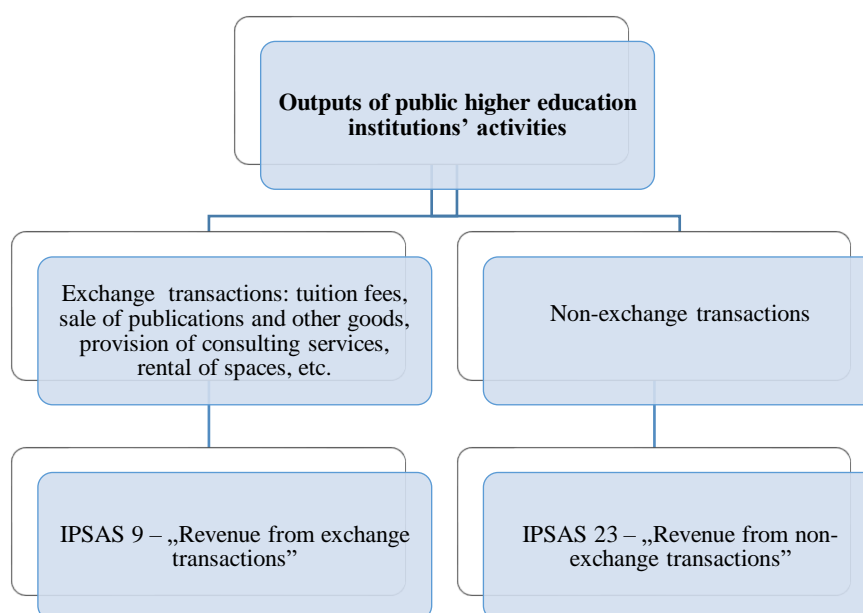


Fig. 5. Classification of transactions in higher education institutions from the IPSAS perspective

Source: prepared by the author

As a result, depending on this classification, the applicable standard (IPSAS 9 or IPSAS 23) and the corresponding revenue recognition model will be determined. It is recommended that institutions voluntarily adopt IPSAS principles in their internal accounting policies and that the explanatory notes to financial statements describe the funding received and its impact on revenue, based on whether there are any conditions or restrictions. This approach would significantly improve the quality of financial information and facilitate decision-making both at the institutional level and for public policy.

The recognition of revenue from tuition fees also presents ambiguities due to the revenue recognition method used in the NAS “Revenue” standard. In our view, the most suitable methods for educational services are those that recognize revenue linearly, based on the duration of educational services over time. This approach ensures consistency, particularly when support

services are offered – academic support, access to libraries, dormitories, labs, and university facilities. The educational process is not limited to classroom hours but includes the full range of services provided throughout the academic year. Revenue recognition should therefore follow a straight-line allocation, regardless of teaching intensity. The same principle applies to cost allocation for staff, utilities, etc. Therefore, linear allocation should apply uniformly for the entire year, i.e., over 12 months.

A key vulnerability lies in the accounting treatment of tuition fee reductions. From the standpoint of compliance with accounting principles, we consider that applying the reversal method is the optimal option in the context of higher education, as it successfully balances transparency requirements with procedural efficiency. This approach contributes to the provision of complete accounting information, enables the adaptation of accounting content to institutional specifics, and supports managerial decision-making. We also consider it useful for institutional accounting policies to explicitly state the accounting treatment of tuition fee reductions. In the explanatory notes attached to financial statements, we recommend that a summary of this treatment be clearly presented. This approach allows external users to fully understand how fee reductions are reflected and correctly evaluate their impact on the financial position of the institution.

The accounting of capital formation sources for educational institutions also presents complexities and limitations. The dispute regarding the existence of social capital, created through ministerial decisions but later challenged by state authorities, highlights a problem generated by the lack of normative clarity from the authorities. This ambiguity leaves institutions responsible for interpreting the legal nature of this capital and how it should be recorded. The solution lies in a legal and economic clarification by the authorities, clearly defining the legal nature of this capital and allowing proper accounting registration aligned with its actual legal/economic status.

In general, the regulatory framework of NAS regarding received assets as property rights and goods used in economic management creates confusion and, in some cases, legal contradictions regarding public sector accounting. In cases where received assets are irrevocable and not subject to restitution, they should be recognized as capital, not revenue, to ensure clarity and consistency in financial reporting.

Accounting rules for recognizing as revenue the return of goods held in economic management or of patrimony owned as property rights contradict the accrual principle and the matching principle of revenues and expenses. We also argued for a progressive revenue recognition model, aligned with the amortization of the respective assets. This approach is consistent with IPSAS principles, which provide for the gradual recognition of conditional transfers. Adopting this recommendation would eliminate distortions in accounting records by avoiding the unjustified concentration of revenue in the fiscal year in which the asset leaves the patrimony (through return or scrapping).

The non-recognition or avoidance by higher education institutions of internally generated intangible assets represents another vulnerability, caused by an outdated regulatory framework. This omission leads to undervaluing the patrimony and missing opportunities for economic valorization. The solution lies in applying IPSAS principles, which require a clear distinction between research and development. Research is recorded as an expense. Development is capitalized only if technical feasibility and economic viability are demonstrated. This approach

provides a faithful view of institutional value and supports proactive intellectual property management.

The current treatment of library collections—especially digital ones—as indefinite-life assets ignores the physical and moral aging of publications. We propose classifying collections into two categories: (1) current collections, including publications with short-term use, amortized conventionally and (2) heritage collections – including materials with historical/cultural value, non-amortizable, but subject to periodic impairment testing.

Este problematică contabilitatea bibliotecilor digitale, deoarece reglementările naționale sunt neadaptate la complexitatea acestor active. Dificultatea principală este tratamentul costurilor de creare/întreținere/acces la bazele de date. Modelul propus (tabelul 2) oferă soluția prin care costurile se capitalizează (devin active) doar dacă se obține controlul pe termen lung asupra resursei, iar dacă se plătește doar un drept de acces temporar (un serviciu) costurile devin cheltuieli curente. Digital library accounting is particularly problematic due to the lack of national regulations adapted to their complexity. The main challenge is the treatment of costs related to creating/maintaining/accessing databases. The proposed model (Table 3) provides a solution: if long-term control over the resource is gained and paid for, the cost is capitalized (recognized as an asset) or If only temporary access is paid, it is considered a current expense.

Table 3. Decision matrix for choosing the accounting option for recognizing access to digital databases

Analysis criterion	Intangible asset	Prepaid expense	Current expense
Nature of rights	Perpetual, irrevocable access right. Analogous to a perpetual license.	Temporary access right, conditional on subscription payment.	Very short-term access right, based on consumption.
Contract duration	Indefinite or long-term.	Defined, usually multiannual or annual.	Defined, usually monthly or per transaction.
Control over the resource	Institution has long-term control over future economic benefits.	Supplier controls access; institution accesses a service.	Benefit is consumed instantly; no control exists.
Post-cancellation clauses	Perpetual access to downloaded content is maintained.	All access rights are terminated.	Irrelevant.
Recognition moment	When the entity obtains control over the resource.	At payment date (as an asset), then allocated as expense.	When the service is rendered/consumed.
Subsequent treatment	Amortized over useful life and tested for impairment.	Systematic allocation in profit and loss over the contract duration.	Fully expensed in profit and loss.

Source: prepared by the author

Managerial accounting in public higher education institutions with financial autonomy is at an early stage of development, characterized by sporadic and inconsistent implementation. The fundamental shortcoming lies in the absence of an integrated cost management architecture. Most institutions lack methodologies and formalized procedures for collecting and centralizing cost data, allocating indirect costs, or conducting analytical cost calculations by study programs or

faculties. There is also a lack of accounting policies specific to managerial accounting. This situation highlights the need to develop a cost calculation methodology adapted to public higher education institutions with financial autonomy, enabling the alignment of management accounting with international best practices.

Chapter 3 „**Reconfiguring accounting in public higher education institutions in the context of reform and European Union Integration of the Republic of Moldova**” stems from the diagnosis of problems identified in previous chapters and translates them into a fundamental reform framework aligned with national strategic objectives for European integration and compliance with EU acquis requirements.

The application of NAS presents limitations for public higher education institutions, whose mission is not limited to profit generation, but also includes the creation of public value through education and research. We consider it appropriate to reconfigure the accounting and financial reporting system by aligning it with international standards for the public sector, which promotes the recording of real costs of educational services, budget planning, and resource identification and optimization.

Table 4. Comparative analysis between NAS and IPSAS in use by public higher education institutions (key aspects)

Key aspects	SNC	IPSAS	Advantages of IPSAS vs SNC
Objective	Providing useful information to investors for capital allocation decisions (profit-oriented)	Improving transparency and accountability in the use of public resources (public service-oriented)	The mission of a public university is public service, not profit.
Main revenues	Transactions with consideration (sales of goods/services). Would follow IFRS 15.	Transactions without consideration (budget allocations, grants). Based on IPSAS 23.	Most funds in a public education institution come from budget allocations and grants.
Concept of benefits	Future economic benefits (cash flows)	Future economic benefits or service potential	Public institutions' assets (e.g., campuses, libraries) provide service value, not cash flow.
Budget reporting	Not a requirement	Mandatory (IPSAS 24) to show accountability in executing the approved budget	Public institutions are funded and operate on a public budget.
Asset depreciation	Based on the asset's capacity to generate cash flows	Has a specific standard for non-cash-generating assets, based on service potential decrease (IPSAS 21)	Most public university assets do not generate cash.
Relationship between Standards	Private sector-based standard	IFRS-adapted to reflect the public sector's specifics.	IPSAS provides „the best of both worlds”: IFRS rigor for similar transactions + public sector alignment

Source: prepared by the author

The convergence of public sector accounting with a framework based on international principles is a global process implemented through various national strategies. The Republic of Moldova has opted for a strategy of transparency and adaptation of IPSAS principles to the local

context, initiating the process of elaboration and development of the National Public Sector Accounting Standards (SNCSP). This direction aligns with the broader trend of convergence evolving within the European Union, currently developing its own set of standards (EPSAS), also based on IPSAS principles. Therefore, it is concluded that the reform of public sector accounting in the Republic of Moldova, based on IPSAS adaptation, organically aligns with general modernization trends in financial governance at the international and European levels. This strategic alignment is essential for increasing transparency, comparability, and efficiency in public financial management and represents a key condition in the path toward European integration.

Public higher education institutions, being public legal entities financed by the state budget, must comply with the budget execution process. However, they are currently not interconnected with the accounting system and financial reporting. It is necessary for institutions with financial autonomy to transition to SNCSP, whose application will require the simultaneous presentation of budgetary and accounting information, allowing clear comparison between the approved budget and actual execution. This transparency is essential for institutional credibility before authorities, funders, and the public.

The current operational environment of higher education institutions is defined by a confluence of pressures that demand a reassessment of how institutions function. On one hand, financial, demographic, and social constraints require greater efficiency. On the other, regulatory and technological pressures demand agility and transparency. In this paradigm, the effectiveness of accounting policies becomes a decisive factor for institutional sustainability and success. The research proposes a methodological framework for evaluating the effectiveness of accounting policies in public higher education institutions with financial autonomy. This framework is designed as a diagnostic and management tool, meant to turn effectiveness into a measurable indicator. The model is structured on two complementary pillars: a system integrating quantitative and qualitative indicators, measuring accounting policy performance across multiple dimensions and an aggregation mechanism of individual indicators into a synthetic effectiveness score. This score, depending on the desired analysis complexity, can be calculated using two methods: a simple arithmetic mean or a weighted average, allowing a nuanced analysis by assigning different weights to each dimension based on its strategic importance for the institution.

At the international level, there is a growing trend toward converging reporting in the university sector with the integrated reporting paradigm. This framework, promoted by the IIRC and supported by IPSASB, offers a holistic view of how an institution creates long-term value by integrating financial capital with intellectual, human, social, and natural capital. Higher education institutions produce a multidimensional reporting ecosystem, reflecting performance in academic, research, financial, and social domains. Thus, the challenge lies in the strategic integration and reconfiguration of existing informational flows into a unified, coherent system. Through methodological adjustments, disjointed reports can be connected to form a comprehensive, efficient system that adds value. Adopting this framework provides a complete presentation that goes beyond raw financial figures, explaining how resources are transformed into educational, scientific, and social impact. It facilitates performance analysis by integrating academic and research indicators alongside financial data, offering a true reflection of institutional success and management efficiency. It also delivers a complete picture of how all capitals are managed, supporting better decisions in resource allocation, risk management, and long-term planning.

The consolidation of the European regulatory framework for sustainability reporting marks a fundamental expansion of the public sector responsibility concept. Performance must be measured through an integrated perspective, which, in addition to financial and non-financial indicators, includes environmental, social, and governance (ESG) dimensions. In this context, adapting these principles by public higher education institutions in the Republic of Moldova should be viewed not only as a requirement for compliance with EU acquis but also as an opportunity for strategic reaffirmation of their central role in society. Through the integration of sustainability into governance and their own reporting, higher education institutions can demonstrate transparently their contribution to long-term sustainable development. This can strengthen their institutional legitimacy and actively support national development goals and European integration.

The financing of higher education based on per-student cost represents a fundamental reform, which must be accompanied by the existence of a robust cost accounting system at the institutional level. The absence of a methodological framework undermines the reform's financial purpose. Without clearly defined cost structures, resource allocation, and cost estimation, it is impossible to set fair standards and funding formulas. The development of competency-based systems is a prerequisite for the efficient and fair functioning of the new higher education funding model. To guide this process, a methodological framework was established, tailored to the national academic context and based on principles of decision-making relevance, flexibility, and pragmatism. The central element of this methodological framework is the cost calculation methodology. In this regard, we developed a methodological algorithm based on the ABC method (Activity-Based Costing), which allocates resources based on cost-consuming activities (see Figure 6). The model is flexible and offers a generalized starting point for the entire sector, allowing for subsequent adjustment and customization based on the specifics of each institution.

Step	Activity	Description
1.	Identifying resources	Classification of available university resources
↓		
2.	Identifying activities	Mapping and grouping university activities
↓		
3.	Cost centers and cost objects	Departments = COST CENTERS Programs = COST OBJECTS
↓		
4.	Identifying and defining cost drivers	Allocation I: No. of courses, administrative structures, lab hours, surface area, no. of students Allocation II: No. of courses/departments, students/program, teaching hours
↓		
5.	Two-level cost allocation	Allocating resources → activities → departments

Step	Activity	Description
↓		
6.	Calculating actual costs	Departments → programs → cost per student

Fig. 6. Stages of the ABC methodological algorithm adapted for universities in the Republic of Moldova

Source: prepared by the author.

The methodological algorithm is based on the collection and organization of data related to university resources (salaries, infrastructure, administrative services), followed by a two-level allocation: the primary distribution of resources to activities based on specific cost drivers, followed by their aggregation at the level of cost centers and allocation to cost objects.

The identification of cost drivers constitutes the logical foundation of the proposed method, replacing arbitrary allocations with allocations based on actual consumption causes. Table 5 presents examples/models of cost drivers applicable in higher education institutions.

Table 5. Categories of cost drivers applicable in higher education

Category of cost drivers	Examples/Models
Volume-based drivers	Number of students, number of courses, number of credits, teaching hours, number of exams; these are the simplest to measure and reflect resource use proportionally to activity volume.
Complexity-based drivers	Number of study programs, number of specializations, diversity of curricular courses; reflect additional consumption caused by increased complexity of educational processes..
Intensity-based drivers	Lab hours, research, academic advising; reflect intensive resource consumption for specialized activities.
Infrastructure-based drivers	Utilized surface area, number of classrooms and laboratories; reflect fixed resource consumption related to infrastructure.

Source: own systematization based on the specialized literature

It is essential that the selection process is carried out rigorously, based on four fundamental criteria: causal relevance, measurability, cost behavior, controllability.

The process ends with the calculation of total costs per program and per student, by summing all allocated cost categories (Figure 7).

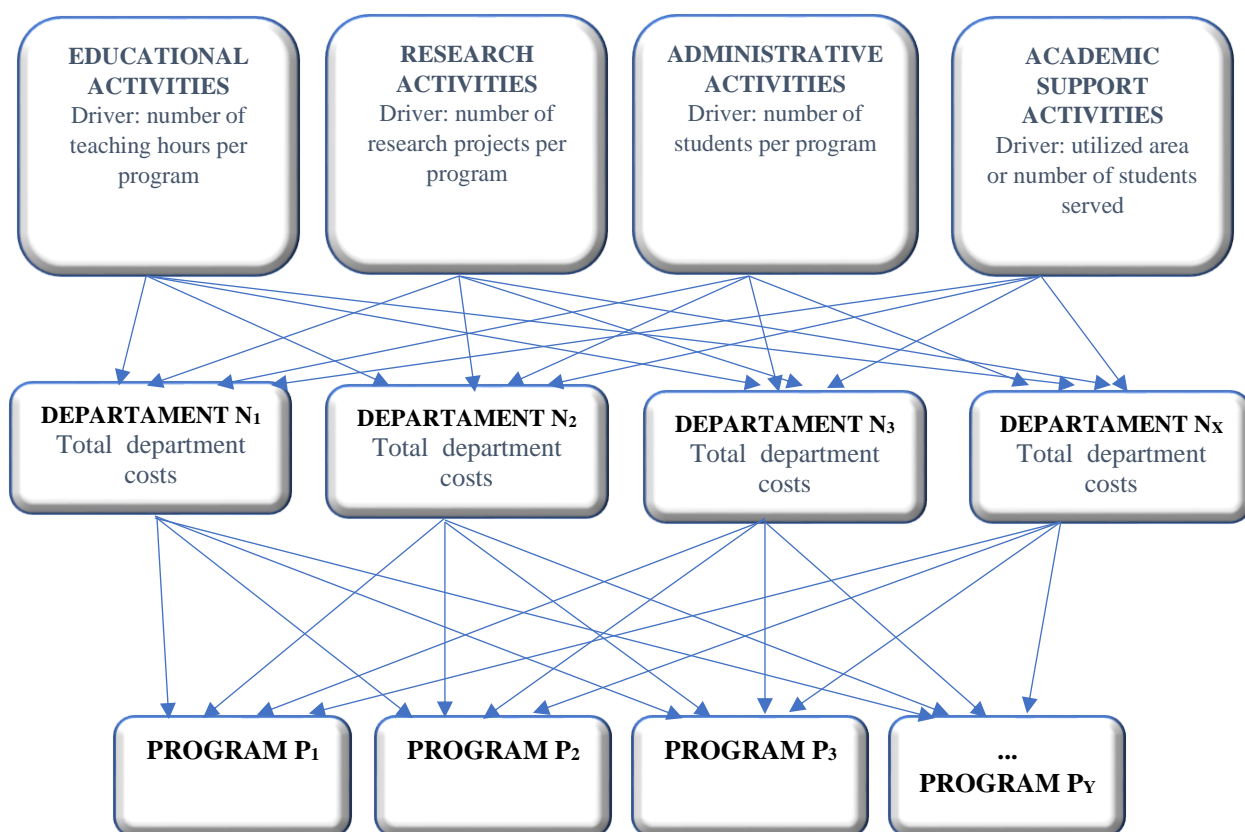


Fig. 7. Distribution of department costs to study programs
Source: own elaboration, based on ABC methodology principles

The proposed cost calculation methodology model reconfigures management accounting as a strategic tool, capable of supporting managerial decision-making and enhancing institutional efficiency and transparency.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Research on accounting issues in public higher education institutions with financial autonomy led to the following conclusions:

1. The implementation of financial autonomy in public higher education institutions in the Republic of Moldova, starting in 2014, led to the transition from cash accounting to NAS, a necessary solution for exercising real autonomy and responsible management. However, NAS proved to be incompatible with the university context, generating conceptual dissonances, volatility, and a lack of coherence in the regulatory framework. This created uncertainty and undermined the consolidation of accounting practices. Managerial accounting, essential for cost analysis, efficient resource use, and managerial control, remains insufficiently integrated into the current accounting and reporting system. This neglect perpetuates a predominantly formal approach to accounting at the expense of performance-oriented, sustainable, and efficient institutional management.

2. The budgetary process in public universities suffers from systemic disconnect between planning (budgeting) and execution (accounting). Research highlights the need to reconfigure the accounting system and align it with IPSAS, which promotes integration into a single framework for financial management and budget execution. The relevance of this issue is reinforced by national commitments under the Republic of Moldova's integration into the European Union. One of the recommendations includes the introduction of an accounting mechanism to apply existing legislation in the field, thereby helping to create a predictable legal environment essential for transparent, efficient, and responsible financial management..
3. The heterogeneity of funding sources in public higher education institutions does not align with the uniform NAS approach, creating ambiguities in revenue recognition. Research emphasizes the need to adapt accounting policies to IPSAS logic by classifying revenue into two categories: exchange transactions and non-exchange transactions. It also proposes and analyzes algorithms for recognition, evaluation, and accounting of revenue generated by research, development, and innovation projects.
4. The research results highlight the lack of regulation for accounting tuition fee reductions granted to students. The analysis of accounting practices shows that the reversal method is the most reliable, as it complies with the principle of true and fair view, avoids overstatement of revenue and expenses, and records revenues at their net realizable value.
5. The patrimonial structure of higher education institutions is complex and heterogeneous, consisting of assets under diverse legal and economic regimes—from equity capital and owned assets to debts related to economically managed assets. The lack of clear delimitation between asset and liability categories causes confusion in recognition and reporting. Research proposes conceptual and methodological clarifications to better distinguish patrimonial elements, improving the accuracy of accounting information and the transparency of university fund management. The practical value of these clarifications is proven by their implementation in institutions such as USMF, contributing to improved transparency and accuracy in managing public and non-refundable resources.
6. The accounting of social capital is marked by a regulatory deadlock, resulting from legislative inconsistencies and the lack of a unified legal framework. The initial establishment of social capital in 2013 was later contested by the Public Services Agency, generating legal uncertainty regarding its patrimonial status. It is therefore necessary to adopt legal provisions that clarify the nature, legal regime, and accounting treatment of social capital for public higher education institutions with financial autonomy.
7. The current NAS framework applied to higher education institutions for assets received for economic management and patrimony received as property rights is vague, with ambiguous accounting rules for their return. We propose a model for the systematic write-off of liabilities, aligned with the asset's amortization through gradual revenue recognition, ensuring a proper matching of revenues with related expenses (amortization) and offering a true and fair view in financial statements.
8. The non-recognition of internally generated intangible assets, due to the generalized nature of NAS and lack of institutional policies, leads to the undervaluation of intellectual capital. We propose a decision-making model that distinguishes between the research and development phases, separating capitalizable costs from those that must be recorded as expenses.

Regarding library collections, the current classification as non-depreciable assets does not reflect their real usage. We recommend separating current collections, subject to amortization, from heritage collections, periodically tested for impairment. Additionally, for digital assets (e.g., digital libraries, databases), we propose a model based on control transfer rather than access rights, ensuring accurate representation of the patrimony and increased transparency.

9. The accounting policies of public higher education institutions currently have a predominantly declarative character, resulting from the mechanical adoption of NAS rules, which reduces both efficiency and decision-making relevance. We propose the concept of "efficient accounting policies", based on an integrated system of multidimensional indicators, capable of transforming accounting policies into a strategic tool for transparency, accountability, and high performance.

The implementation of this concept in institutions like ASEM proved that it is a real and sustainable tool for measuring and predicting accounting policy effectiveness.

10. Managerial accounting in public higher education institutions with financial autonomy is still in an early stage, characterized by sporadic implementation and lack of a cost management framework. The absence of methodologies for collecting, allocating, and analyzing costs limits the application of per-student financing. The key to aligning managerial accounting with European best practices is the cost calculation methodology based on the ABC method (Activity-Based Costing), which ensures well-founded managerial decisions and improves institutional efficiency and transparency in resource use.
11. At the international level, there is a clear trend toward the convergence of university reporting with the integrated reporting paradigm, promoted by the IIRC and supported by IPSASB. This framework offers a holistic view of long-term value creation by integrating financial capital with intellectual, human, social, and natural capital. For higher education institutions, the challenge is to strategically integrate financial and non-financial reports into a single, unified system that combines academic performance, research outcomes, and social impact. Adopting integrated reporting allows for a comprehensive presentation of institutional success and gives management a complete perspective for making strategic decisions on resource allocation, risk management, and long-term planning.
12. The strengthening of the European sustainability reporting framework expands the responsibilities of the public sector, including ESG dimensions alongside financial indicators. We propose that higher education institutions in Moldova implement sustainability (ESG) reporting in accordance with new EU standards. This is both a compliance requirement for European integration and a strategic opportunity to demonstrate value and act as a model of responsible governance.

The scientific contribution of this research lies in the theoretical and methodological foundation for the transition of the accounting system in public higher education institutions toward a normative framework aligned with their mission. The transition to SNCSP leads to the harmonization of national accounting practices with international and European ones. This alignment strengthens institutional credibility with external partners and directly contributes to fulfilling Moldova's European integration commitments. The accounting judgments and models proposed for complex financial reporting provide clarity in recording patrimonial assets, such as:

assets received as property, assets under economic management, social capital, digital libraries. The cost calculation and allocation methodology resolves inefficiencies and the lack of transparency in the distribution of public funds, ensuring equity and accountability in resource allocation, and aligning costs with the actual needs of various study domains. The proposed evaluation model for accounting policy effectiveness, based on multidimensional indicators, helps anticipate risks, inefficiencies, and errors, supporting transparency and performance. The transition to SNCSP is shown to avoid one of the major problems in current practice—the disconnect between budgeting and accounting, as well as misalignment with principles of public financial management.

The synthesized findings form the basis for the following strategic recommendations to support the reconfiguration of accounting in public higher education institutions:

1. Explicit inclusion of public higher education institutions with financial autonomy in Moldova's national transition strategy to Public Sector Accounting Standards (SNCSP) to resolve current regulatory conflicts and ensure coherence and comparability in public sector reporting.
2. Development of internal financial management processes by universities with financial autonomy, through the adoption of a methodological framework for university cost calculation.
3. Operationalization of the efficient accounting policy concept, developed in the research, using it as a methodological guide in institutions' efforts to develop their own accounting policies.
4. Promoting a proactive approach to performance reporting in universities, shifting from fragmented reports to an integrated reporting model. Institutions should choose between or combine sustainability reports and integrated reports. Sustainability reporting allows the institution to structure and communicate its non-financial impact clearly. Integrated reporting links sustainability to financial performance, governance, and strategic impact, providing a holistic picture of how the institution uses all its capitals (financial, intellectual, human, social, and natural) to fulfill its mission.
5. Reevaluation of digitalization strategies, focusing on the creation of an integrated information system. Digitalization is the key driver that enables the efficient and value-added implementation of SNCSP. This system must be designed to support SNCSP requirements and to transform financial data into useful information for strategic management, generating benefits such as operational efficiency, compliance, informed decision-making, and enhanced transparency.

Research Limitations. The author encountered certain limitations related to restricted access to detailed financial data and the subjectivity of qualitative data, which necessitated corroborating various sources to ensure the objectivity of the research. Other limitations refer to the lack of longitudinal data for evaluating the long-term impact of reforms, the need for continuous updates of analyses in the context of evolving international public sector accounting standards, the specific features of the national educational system, resistance to change, and the limited resources available for modernizing accounting systems.

Future Research Directions. Based on the results obtained and the limitations identified, the following future research directions in the field of accounting for public higher education institutions are proposed:

- Longitudinal studies and impact assessments to evaluate the long-term effects of SNCSP implementation on the financial and operational performance of higher education institutions.

These studies could monitor trends in efficiency and effectiveness indicators of accounting policies over medium and long periods, offering empirical evidence of the benefits of the proposed reforms. Additionally, it would be valuable to conduct analyses that measure the impact of the ABC method on the accuracy of university cost calculations and the quality of management decisions based on this information.

- International comparative studies to explore adaptation and implementation strategies for public sector accounting standards in various educational systems, identifying best practices and success factors transferable to the national context. Such studies could include analysis of transition processes in similar education systems, cost evaluation, benefits of implementation in different contexts, and the identification of optimal models of university financial governance.

- Studies on the implementation of artificial intelligence in processing accounting transactions, and the use of blockchain to ensure transparency and data integrity in financial reporting, along with the development of business intelligence systems specific to the education sector.

Research into user interfaces optimized for university personnel, as well as automation solutions for financial reporting, represents a promising research direction with high potential.

- Interdisciplinary research that integrates perspectives from accounting, educational management, public policy, and social sciences. This approach would support the development of integrative theoretical frameworks that reflect the complexity of the university environment and the diversity of stakeholders involved.

We consider the continuation of research essential, as the scientific results offer a valuable foundation for policy decision-makers, university management, regulatory and accounting bodies, facilitating the transition toward a transparent and internationally aligned accounting system based on best European practices.

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ADNOTARE

ȚURCANU Liliana, „Problematici ale contabilității în instituțiile de învățământ superior cu autonomie financiară”, teză de doctor în științe economice, Chișinău, 2025.

Structura tezei: adnotare, introducere, trei capitole, concluzii și recomandări, bibliografie din 327 de titluri, 17 anexe, 139 pagini de text de bază, 26 figuri și 19 tabele. Rezultatele obținute sunt publicate în 14 lucrări științifice.

Cuvinte-cheie: instituții publice de învățământ superior, autonomie financiară, patrimoniu universitar, venituri universitare, contabilitate de gestiune, calculația costurilor, politici contabile, raportare financiară, raportare integrată și de sustenabilitate, management universitar, transparență financiară, guvernanta academică, standarde naționale contabile, IPSAS.

Domeniu de studii: contabilitate.

Scopul cercetării: constă în investigarea principalelor problematici ale contabilității în instituțiile publice de învățământ superior, cu accent pe identificarea disfuncționalităților, analizarea cauzelor acestora și formularea de soluții pentru optimizarea proceselor contabile și creșterea transparenței financiare.

Obiectivele cercetării: analiza evoluției contabilității în instituțiile publice de învățământ superior din Republica Moldova și evaluarea funcționalității sale ca instrument de fundamentare a deciziilor; investigarea interdependenței dintre gradul de autonomie financiară și paradigma contabilă a universităților publice; analiza gradului de adecvare a cadrului normativ contabil la realitățile instituțiilor publice de învățământ superior; evaluarea critică a modului de înregistrare contabilă a finanțărilor, explorarea ambiguităților și a neconformităților în tratamentele contabile aferente patrimoniului instituțiilor de învățământ; elaborarea și testarea indicatorilor de evaluare a eficacității politicilor contabile; determinarea limitelor contabilității manageriale și elaborarea unui model conceptual-metodologic de calculație a costurilor, adaptat specificului misiunii academice; analiza oportunității implementării raportării integrate și de sustenabilitate în instituțiile publice de învățământ superior, în vederea consolidării transparenței și responsabilității publice.

Noutatea și originalitatea științifică a cercetării: rezidă în soluționarea cu succes a unui ansamblu de probleme care vizează organizarea și dezvoltarea contabilității în instituțiile publice de învățământ superior cu autonomie financiară. Acestea se reflectă în propunerea unui algoritm de înregistrări contabile pentru analiza tranzacțiilor complexe, elaborarea unui concept metodologic integrat pentru calculația costurilor, precum și conceptualizarea și validarea empirică a unui sistem de indicatori pentru evaluarea multidimensională a eficacității politicilor contabile.

Rezultatele obținute care contribuie la soluționarea unei probleme științifice importante derivă din scopul și obiectivele lucrării și constau în fundamentarea din punct de vedere științific și metodologic a raționamentelor și algoritmilor de înregistrări contabile pentru diversele surse complexe de finanțare, clarificarea în aspect metodologic a judecăților contabile pentru contabilizarea unor categorii de active specifice patrimoniului universitar, argumentarea reconfigurării contabilității în instituțiile publice de învățământ superior în contextul tranziției la SNCSP, proiectarea conceptului metodologic de calculație și alocare a costurilor, abordarea standardelor de sustenabilitate și a modului în care instituțiile le pot integra prin raportarea integrată.

Implementarea rezultatelor științifice: rezultatele științifice obținute pot fi implementate prin aplicarea modelelor dezvoltate permițând perfecționarea contabilității în universitățile publice cu autonomie financiară și consolidarea fundamentării deciziilor manageriale. Recomandările formulate au fost validate prin acceptarea și integrarea lor în practica contabilă a unor instituții publice de învățământ superior, confirmând relevanța și valoarea aplicativă a cercetării.

ANNOTATION

ȚURCANU Liliana. Accounting issues in higher education institutions with financial autonomy. PhD Thesis in Economic Sciences, Chișinău, 2025.

Thesis structure: abstract, introduction, three chapters, conclusions and recommendations, bibliography of 327 titles, 17 appendices, 139 pages of main text, 26 figures, and 19 tables. The obtained results are published in 14 scientific papers.

Keywords: public higher education institutions, financial autonomy, university assets, university revenues, management accounting, cost calculation, accounting policies, financial reporting, integrated and sustainability reporting, university management, financial transparency, academic governance, national accounting standards, IPSAS.

Field of study: accounting.

Research purpose: to investigate the main accounting issues in public higher education institutions, with a focus on identifying dysfunctions, analyzing their causes, and formulating solutions for optimizing accounting processes and enhancing financial transparency.

Research objectives: analyzing the evolution of accounting in public higher education institutions in the Republic of Moldova and assessing its functionality as a decision-making tool; investigating the interdependence between the degree of financial autonomy and the accounting paradigm of public universities; analyzing the adequacy of the accounting regulatory framework in relation to the realities of public higher education institutions; evaluating the accounting registration of funding, exploring ambiguities and inconsistencies in the accounting treatments related to institutional assets; developing and testing indicators for assessing the effectiveness of accounting policies; determining the limits of managerial accounting and developing a conceptual-methodological cost calculation model tailored to the specific nature of the academic mission; analyzing the feasibility of implementing integrated and sustainability reporting in public higher education institutions to strengthen transparency and public accountability.

The scientific novelty and originality of the research: lie in successfully addressing a set of issues related to the organization and development of accounting in public higher education institutions with financial autonomy. These are reflected in the proposal of a professional reasoning model in the form of an accounting registration algorithm capable of guiding the analysis of complex transactions, in the development of an adapted methodological concept for cost calculation, as well as in the conceptualization and empirical validation of an integrated system of indicators for the multidimensional evaluation of the effectiveness of accounting policies.

The results obtained that contribute to solving an important scientific problem: derive from the purpose and objectives of the thesis and consist in the scientific and methodological substantiation of reasoning and algorithms for accounting entries related to complex sources of financing, the methodological clarification of accounting judgments for recording categories of assets specific to university patrimony, the argumentation for reconfiguring accounting in public higher education institutions in the context of the transition to NASPS, the design of the methodological concept for cost calculation, as well as the approach to sustainability standards and the ways in which institutions can integrate them through integrated reporting.

Implementation of scientific results: the obtained scientific results can be implemented through the application of the developed models, allowing the improvement of accounting in financially autonomous public universities and the strengthening of the foundation for managerial decision-making. The formulated recommendations have been validated by their acceptance and integration into the accounting practice of several public higher education institutions, confirming the relevance and practical value of the research.

АННОТАЦИЯ

ЦУРКАНУ Лилиана, Проблемы бухгалтерского учета в высших учебных заведениях с финансовой автономией, диссертация на соискание ученой степени доктора экономических наук, Кишинев, 2025.

Структура диссертации: аннотация, введение, три главы, выводы и рекомендации, библиография из 327 источников, 17 приложения, 139 страниц основного текста, 26 рисунка и 19 таблиц. Полученные результаты опубликованы в 14 научных работах.

Ключевые слова: государственные высшие учебные заведения, финансовая автономия, университетское имущество, университетские доходы, управленческий учет, калькуляция затрат, учетная политика, финансовая отчетность, интегрированная и устойчивая отчетность, университетский менеджмент, финансовая прозрачность, академическое управление, национальные стандарты бухгалтерского учета, IPSAS.

Область исследования: бухгалтерский учет.

Цель исследования состоит в изучении основных проблем бухгалтерского учета в государственных вузах, с акцентом на выявляемые дисфункции, анализ их причин и выработку решений для оптимизации учетных процессов и повышения финансовой прозрачности.

Задачи исследования: анализ эволюции бухгалтерского учета в государственных вузах Республики Молдова и оценка его роли как инструмента управленческих решений; исследование взаимосвязи между уровнем финансовой автономии и учетной парадигмой университетов; анализ соответствия нормативной базы реалиям вузов; критическая оценка методов учета финансирования, выявление неопределенностей в учете университетского имущества; разработка и апробация показателей эффективности учетной политики; определение ограничений управленческого учета и разработка концептуально-методологической модели калькуляции затрат, адаптированной к академической миссии; анализ возможностей внедрения интегрированной и устойчивой отчетности в целях повышения прозрачности и общественной подотчетности

Научная новизна и оригинальность исследования: заключаются в успешном решении комплекса проблем, связанных с организацией и развитием бухгалтерского учета в государственных высших учебных заведениях с финансовой автономией. Это выражается в предложении модели профессиональных суждений в форме алгоритма бухгалтерских записей, способного направлять анализ сложных хозяйственных операций, в разработке интегрированной методологической концепции, адаптированной для калькуляции затрат, а также в концептуализации и эмпирической проверке интегрированной системы показателей для многомерной оценки эффективности учетной политики.

Результаты, способствующие решению важной научной проблемы: вытекают из целей и задач исследования и заключаются в научно-методологическом обосновании суждений и алгоритмов бухгалтерских записей для сложных источников финансирования, в уточнении методологических аспектов учета категорий активов университетского имущества, в аргументации необходимости реорганизации бухгалтерского учета в государственных вузах в условиях перехода к НСБУГС, в проектировании методологической концепции калькуляции затрат, а также в рассмотрении стандартов устойчивости и возможностей их интеграции через систему интегрированной отчетности.

Внедрение научных результатов: полученные научные результаты могут быть реализованы посредством применения разработанных моделей, что позволит усовершенствовать бухгалтерский учет в государственных университетах с финансовой автономией и укрепить основу для управленческих решений. Сформулированные рекомендации были подтверждены их принятием и интеграцией в бухгалтерскую практику ряда государственных вузов, что подтверждает актуальность и прикладную значимость исследования.

ȚURCANU LILIANA

**ACCOUNTING ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS WITH
FINANCIAL AUTONOMY**

522.02 – „ACCOUNTING; AUDIT; ECONOMIC ANALYSIS”

Summary of the doctoral thesis in economic sciences

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