Bulletin of the *Transilvania* University of Braşov
Series V: Economic Sciences • Vol. 8 (57) No. 2 - 2015

Dimensions of Financial Audit in Romania and Spain

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Abstract: *The main objective of this paper is to realize a comparative study regarding the theory and practice of financial audit in Romania and Spain. To achieve this goal, we performed a documentary research of the main papers in this area and of the applicable regulations research that allowed us to identify convergences and differences as concerns the financial audit in Romania and Spain. There are many divergences, on different levels: the perimeter of regulations, the conditions for becoming a financial auditor, but also regarding the evolution of the financial audit markets, the mandatory limits for auditing the financial statements, etc. Although Spain has a longer tradition in the area of financial audit, in Romania, there were also conducted financial audit missions in accordance with the international audit standards since the recognition of this activity, in 1999.*

Key-words: *financial audit, statutory audit, dynamics, Romania, Spain*

1. Introduction

This crisis of the financial markets has revealed weak aspects of the existing control systems, based more on further intervention than on preventive controls. Today, more than ever, in an age of information in which the credibility of financial statements becomes critical for each company, institution or government, the importance of the accuracy of the accounting information included in these documents finds materialization through financial audits.

The role of the financial audit and, therefore, of the financial auditor is, ultimately, to protect the public's interest. However, we have to consider that the value of the financial audit is dependent on the quality and utility of the financial statements, which involves a general approach of the accountancy profession, as the main provider of real information that presents a fair image of the financial position and performance of an economic entity (Toma 2011, 5).

Initially, the audit activity was realized by accountants and priests, known in society for their moral qualities, and aim to keep the sincerity of the people with

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financial responsibilities or to prevent, detect and punish fraud. Starting with the 18th century, the audit was requested by the state or banks, and the auditors were chosen from the best accountants in order to identify the best solutions to preserve the integrity of assets (Morariu et al., 2008).

However, the profession of financial auditor did not exist until the Industrial Revolution. This is recognized in the 19th century when the financial audit is focused on avoiding frauds, errors and respecting the accounting principles. The first financial audit offices and the first regulations in this area appeared in Great Britain and were formulated in the Companies Act – 1862 (Lapteş et al., 2014).

The financial audit activity has acquired new meanings after the Great Depression of 1929-1933 because the importance of the audit report has increased exponentially when the New York Stock Exchange forced the listed companies to attach it to the balance sheet and income statement, which were the only summary documents prepared in that time (Lapteş et al., 2014).

The American president, Franklin Roosevelt, had an important role in the reform of the financial system and founded the U.S. Security and Exchange Commission (S.E.C.) in order to regulate the securities market and to prevent events similar to the Wall Street crash from 1929 (Ristea et al., 2006).

Thus, in 20th century, the financial audit had developed into the idea of solving conflicts of interests between producers and users of accounting information, the responsibilities of financial auditors being completed with the verification of the physical existence of the assets declared by an entity (Lapteş et al., 2014).

The development of capital markets has led to an increase of the demand for the financial audits. Important changes in the philosophy of the financial audit and in the regulations occurred in the 21st century and were due to the huge financial scandals that occurred in the U.S.A. (Ristea et al., 2006).

The best known examples are those of the companies Enron, Xerox, WorldCom and Parmalat from Europe, entities which, in the 2000s, implemented misleading accounting practices in order to obtain cash quickly.

The natural gas supplier Enron suddenly declared bankruptcy in December 2001 after reporting, a year earlier, a profit over $100 billion. The financial scandal was due to overestimating profit and underestimating debts, context in which Enron's shares dropped significantly, from $90 apiece (as it worth in the mid-2000s) at only 10 cents in October 2001.

The multinational company Xerox registered incomes from leases that were based on copy machines at the time of signing the contract and not on its entire duration, which generated an artificial gap of $3 billion in revenue and $1.4 billion as earnings before taxes.

Between 1999 and 2002, the second largest company of long distance communications from U.S.A., WorldCom, had classified more than $3.8 billion of line charges (what WorldCom pays to other companies for using communications networks) as capital cost and not as current expense, managing to increase artificially both, its net profit (costs being under evaluated) and its total assets (capitalized costs were incorrectly treated as an investment) (Like et al., 2002).

The financial scandal concerning the company Parmalat was due to its founder, Calixto Tanzi, who used company's money in politics, for sponsorship in sports and who bought other entities with borrowed money, covering the absence of $5 billion recognized in company's balance sheet from September 2003 as receivables related to companies owned in tax heavens which declared non-existent amounts.

The result of these financial scandals, which led to the loss of investors' confidence in the quality of the accounting information published in the financial statements, was the adoption of Sarbanes-Oxley Act in 2002, requiring to listed companies on the New York Stock Exchange to show transparency towards investors and to develop an adequate system of internal control in order to ensure the accuracy of the financial reports.

This act that includes issues related to financial auditors independence, corporate governance, internal control, transparency and credibility of the financial statements, had a positive impact in restoring investors' confidence in the capital market (Dobre 2010, 263).

Nowadays, the objective of financial audit is „to improve the use of accounting information" and to guarantee the reliability of this information in front of various categories of users (Boajă et al., 2008).

2. Research Methodology

This study aims to formulate answers to questions like:

- When has the financial audit appeared in Romania and Spain and what importance does it have?
- What are the institutions responsible for regulating and controlling the financial audit in the two states?
- How was it developed and what evolution did the profession of financial auditor in Romania and Spain have?
- What companies are required to audit the financial statements in Romania and Spain?
- What are the main similarities and differences between the financial audits in Romania and in Spain?

To achieve this goal, we performed a fundamental normative research based on a comparative study. The whole paper is based on a documentary research having the following sources of information: accounting and financial audit regulations from Romania and Spain, Directive 2006/43/EC, international standards on auditing, relevant electronic databases like the websites of public institutions from Romania and Spain, economic magazines from both countries and, last but not least, economic literature from Romania and Spain – books and articles. To study the Spanish literature, we had access to the library of the Polytechnic University of Valencia (campus of Alcoy).

Our choice for a comparative study between Romania and Spain in the area of the financial audit can be justified by the similar characteristics and the differences existing between these two countries.

Among the similarities, we find the influence of the French doctrine on the accounting systems, the similar social, legal, cultural and economic circumstances, as well as the peripheral position in the moment of accession to the European Union.

In the category of divergences, we can mention the favourable socio-economic evolution of Spain after its adherence to the European Union, which happened 21 years earlier than Romania, Spain's larger experience in the financial audit activity compared to the reality of Romania, as well as the large number of studies on the topic realized in this country (Pop, 2013).

3. Results and Discussions

3.1. Appearance and development of the financial audit in Spain

Today, the institution that regulates and controls the activity of financial audit in Spain is the Institute of Accounting and Audit (Instituto de Contabilidad y Auditoría de Cuentas – I.C.A.C.), an autonomous body that operates in cooperation with the Ministry of Economy and Competition (Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad).

The main regulations issued in this area are: the revised text of the Law on Auditing the Financial Statements (Texto refundido de la Ley de Auditoría de Cuentas – L.A.C.) approved by the Royal Decree no. 1/2011 and the rules for the application of this law (Reglamento de desarrollo del texto refundido de la Ley de Auditoría de Cuentas) approved by the Royal Decree no. 1517/2011.

The revised text of the Law on Auditing the Financial Statements and its rules of application define the financial audit as follows: „the activity consisting in controlling and checking the annual accounts as well as other financial statements or accounting documents, drawn up according to the applicable financial regulations, in order to write a report regarding the reliability of those documents that can influence the decisions of the third parties".

Thus, the first law in matters related to the financial audit was published only two years after joining the European Union. It is the Law of Financial Audit no. 19/1988 (Ley 19/1988 de Auditoría de Cuentas), act that established mandatory limits for auditing the financial statements – until 1988, this activity was voluntary (Pop 2013, 5).

Until 1988, in Spain, there were different bodies that incorporated independent financial auditors and financial audit firms. In 1943, it was founded the Institute of Authorized Censors (Instituto de Censores Jurados de Cuentas – I.C.J.C.), an entity linked to the Ministry of Economy and Public Administration that used well-defined criteria to restrict the access of its members. In 1982, it was created the Register of Economists and Auditors (Registro de Economistas Auditores – R.E.A.) with the aim to regulate and defend the economist's activity in the area of financial audit (Prado Lorenzo 1995: 634).

The last change in financial audit was realized through the Law no. 12/2010 with the role of adapting national legislation to the E.U. Directive 2006/43/EC in order to achieve a higher level of reconciliation with the audit activity performed in the European Union (Mendez 2008).

With the first law of financial audit, in 1988, the following bodies were founded: I.C.A.C., the Official Register of Accounts' Auditors (Registro Oficial de Auditores de Cuentas – R.O.A.C.) which depends on the Institute and the General Register of Auditors (Registro General de Auditores – R.G.A.) which depends on the Superior Council of Independent Traders (Consejo Superior de Titulares Mercantiles).

The creation of the Institute of Accounting and Audit brings with it the obligation to be a member in order to continue to exercise the profession of financial auditor. As a result, at that time, there was an avalanche of requests from the existing professionals to gain the authorization from I.C.A.C. Although it has been tried to sort the applicants, the number of the registered people was nearly of 60.000 persons and a lot of them obtained the license necessarily to perform financial audit (Pop 2013, 6).

Another aspect which supports Spain's tradition in terms of financial audit compared to the Romanian reality in the same area, is the fact that the role of the professional organizations (I.C.A.C., R.E.A., R.E.G.A.) is well defined and the professional interests of the financial auditors are better protected (Pop 2013).

The revised text of the Law on Auditing the Financial Statements mentions that a person can become a financial auditor if he is a natural or legal person registered in the R.O.A.C. The registration involves gaining the authorization from the Institute of Accounting and Audit, and, for this, the person must fulfil the following requirements (Martinez Ortega 2006):

- have a university degree;
- follow a theoretical program and a 3 years practical training in the financial-accounting field, out of which, at least 2 years under the supervision of an active auditor or an audit company;
- pass an exam of professional skills organized and recognized by law.

A person can also register to the R.O.A.C. if he doesn't have higher education as long as he obtained the title required for the admission to the university and he has a practical experience of minimum 8 years, 5 of them under the supervision of a financial auditor (Martinez Ortega, 2006).

In Spain, the financial auditor is defined as an independent and qualified professional who controls the accounting ledgers, the process of writing the financial statements and the financial statements themselves, in order to write a report concerning the reliability of the audited accounting documents. In addition, financial auditors can express their opinion about other circumstances affecting the company, but not reflected in accounting (Carrasco Gallego et al., 2009).

Concerning the evolution of the profession of financial auditor in Spain, we observed a continuous increase of the number of financial auditors after the introduction of this activity. Thus, if in 1990, there were 14.113 financial auditors, individuals and companies, in 2010, there were recognized 20.989 financial auditors (49% more than in the reference year).

It was also noticed that the number of active individuals is relatively constant, between 5.100 and 5.900 financial auditors, as opposed to non-active individuals whose number presented a spectacular increase from one year to another, reaching almost the double in 2010 compared to 1990. However, the number of legal persons that provide financial audit services has increased constantly in the period under review (1990-2010).

More details regarding the dynamics of financial auditors in Spain between 1990 and 2010, based on own processing of the information that we've obtained from the Official Bulletin of the Institute of Accounting and Audit, can be found in the following table:

Auditors	**1990**	**1992**	**2001**	**2002**	**2005**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Natural persons, of which:	**13.468**	**13.418**	**16.051**	**16.942**	**17.497**	**18.934**	**18.959**	**19.616**	**19.636**
Active	5.847	5.416	5.213	5.672	5.128	5.548	5.467	5.758	5.589
Non-active	7.621	8.002	10.838	11.270	12.369	13.162	13.492	13.858	14.047
Companies	**645**	**713**	**997**	**1.070**	**1.187**	**1.260**	**1.297**	**1.343**	**1.353**
Total	**14.113**	**14.131**	**17.048**	**18.012**	**18.684**	**20.194**	**20.256**	**20.959**	**20.989**

Table 1. *The evolution of the number of auditors registered in R.O.A.C. during 1990-2010*

We may consider that there are two causes that led to the relatively constant number of active financial auditors. On one hand, the emergence of the statutory audit determined a lot of companies to search for cheaper services (because managers did not understand the added value and the importance of an auditor's work, but only tried to fulfil an obligation mentioned in the law), which is why most of the financial auditors switched to better paid activities.

On the other hand, during this period, the sanctions applied to the entities which did not respect the obligation to audit the financial statements were insignificant, many financial auditors being unable to exercise their profession (Pop 2013, 7).

Concerning the number of financial audit missions performed in Spain during 1990-2010 (Table 2), we can observe an explosion in 1991 when the number of mandatory audit missions increased 7.5 times.

Another spectacular growth occurred in 2000 when there were conducted 48.837 financial audit missions, almost the double of the '90. This ascending course maintained until 2008 (the year of world's economic boom followed by the start of the great recession which had a powerful impact on Spain), when there was a maximum of 68.882 financial audit missions in total and it was followed by a slight decrease in the next two years. Paradoxically, this phenomenon takes place in a context of decrease of mandatory audit missions and increase of volunteer ones.

A lot of economic entities went bankrupt and those who managed to survive the crisis chose to audit the financial statements, which may suggest that, during this period, the companies' managers understood much better the importance of the audit report and the existing need to win the investors' trust.

Details regarding the dynamics of the financial audit missions conducted in Spain in the period 1990-2010, obtained by processing the information found in the Official Bulletin of the Institute of Accounting and Audit, can be found in the following table:

Mission type	**1990**	**1991**	**2001**	**2002**	**2005**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Statutory	2.212	16.492	24.047	24.380	31.997	37.805	40.159	39.106	38.539
Volunteer	3.490	4.059	10.699	11.669	13.552	14.763	15.351	15.657	17.184
Others	1.319	4.095	14.091	15.563	12.765	13.119	13.372	13.098	12.884
TOTAL	**7.021**	**24.646**	**48.837**	**51.612**	**58.314**	**65.687**	**68.882**	**67.861**	**68.607**

Table 2. *The dynamics of the financial audit missions conducted in Spain during 1990-2010*

According to the revised text of the Law on Auditing the Financial Statements, the following are required to audit the financial statements: entities issuing titles admitted to trading on regulated markets and issuing public bonds, entities which provide services of financial intermediation, private insurance companies and entities that receive subsidies or provide services to the state or other public institutions with certain limits fixed by law. In addition, it must audit the financial reports the entities that, for two consecutive years, exceed the limits of two of the following three size criteria:

- for individual financial statements: total assets – €2.850.000, net sales – €5.700.000, number of employees – 50 persons;

- for consolidated financial statements: total assets – €11.400.000, net sales – €22.800.000, number of employees – 250 persons.

Therefore, two decades after the issue of the L.A.C., Spain's financial audit market is dominated by audit offices, given that the independent auditors' fees represented, in 2010, only 7% of the total national revenue. This might suggest the existence of a lot of multinational companies with Spanish capital, which support the country's economy and cannot be audited by an independent financial auditor, but by a team of professionals, members of an audit firm (Pop 2013: 9).

3.2. Appearance and development of financial audit in Romania

The professional body empowered to regulate, organize, coordinate and authorize the financial audit and the profession of financial auditor in Romania is the Chamber of Financial Auditors of Romania (C.A.F.R.), which operates under the supervision of the Ministry of Public Finance.

Among the specific regulations of financial audit, there are acts regulating both, the way this activity occurs as well as the persons empowered to exercise it and the ethics and professional conduct that these persons should have, as follows: G.E.O. no. 75/1999 on financial audit, with subsequent amendments and additions, Rules of the organization and functioning of the Chamber of Financial Auditors of Romania, G.E.O. no. 90/2008 on statutory audit of financial statements and consolidated financial statements.

At the time of the creation of C.A.F.R. through G.E.O. no. 75/1999, its temporarily Committee has assumed the role of incorporating the international audit standards and the code of ethics and professional conduct issued by the I.F.A.C. (International Federation of Accountants) in national regulations regarding financial audit, which it was succeeded starting 2000s (Dobroțeanu et al., 2002).

The first definition of financial audit was formulated in Romania in the book Regulations to audit and certify the balance sheet, which appeared in 1995, as a supplement of the Journal of Accounting and Expertise issued by the Body of Chartered Accountants and Certified Accountants of Romania (C.E.C.C.A.R.), as follows: „the examination performed by a competent professional (censor, chartered accountant or certified accountant with higher education) in order to express a motivated opinion concerning the accuracy and the correct application of the internal procedures established by the company's management and the fair, clear and complete image of the assets, financial position and results of the enterprise" (Ristea et al., 2006).

The profession of financial auditor was recognized in Romania only in 1999 through the issuance of G.E.O. no. 75/1999 on financial audit, act that defined the financial audit as „the examination made by financial auditors in order to express an opinion about the financial statements in accordance to the audit standards, harmonized with the international audit standards and adopted by the Chamber of Financial Auditors".

Article 2 of this act, republished in 2013, has developed the definition of financial audit as follows: „the financial audit is the activity performed by financial auditors in order to express an opinion concerning the financial statements or a component of it, or to perform any other assurance and professional services, according to the international audit standards and other regulations adopted by the C.A.F.R.". The definition of the financial audit ends with the mention that the financial audit includes the statutory audit.

The statutory audit is the audit of the annual financial statements and consolidated annual financial statements, conducted according to the law (originally laid down in the 8th Directive of the European Union, which is now replaced by Directive 2006/43/EC) and transposed into national regulations by G.E.O. no. 90/2008.

According to the national regulations on financial audit, for an individual to be able to acquire the quality of financial auditor, he must fulfil the following conditions (Fulop 2014, 15):

- to be graduated of a faculty with economic profile or another faculty and to have followed an additional training program with economic profile;
- to have a work experience in the financial-accounting field for at least 4 years or to have acquired the quality of chartered accountant, respectively of certified accountant with higher economic studies;
- to have a 3 years practical training in financial audit under the supervision of an active financial auditor, training at which he had access after passing a test in the financial-accounting area and during which he had an appropriate professional behaviour, according to the Code of Ethics issued by the I.F.A.C. and adopted by the C.A.F.R.;
- to pass an exam of professional skills at the end of the practical training, according to the law.

In Romania, the market of financial auditors (Table 3) had a shy beginning. For 13 years, there has been registered a significant upward trend of both, individual auditors and audit companies, reaching a total number at the end of the period of 10 times higher than in 2000.

The number of active financial auditors followed an upward course, reaching, in 2012, the value of 4.251 persons, a significant increase of 11 times compared to 2000. Moreover, the slight increase of the number of non-active financial auditors (except the year 2002 when there was a decrease of 27% compared to 2001) demonstrates clearly that financial audit services were more and more required, making a lot of people want to practice in this area. Also, the number of legal persons has grown constantly (except the year 2009 when it had reduced with 7% compared to 2008), but without exceeding, at the end of 2012, to 1.000 companies.

After processing the data published in the annual report of the Council of the C.A.F.R., we have obtained the following situation regarding the evolution of the number of financial auditors in Romania, during 2000-2012:

Auditors	2000	2001	2002	2005	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Natural persons	**470**	**1.309**	**1.478**	**1.567**	**2.317**	**2.649**	**3.164**	**3.691**	**4.046**	**4.921**
Active Non-active	382 88	944 365	1.213 265	1.277 290	1.927 390	2.203 446	2.706 458	3.134 557	3.431 615	4.251 670
Companies	0	121	303	623	805	875	814	893	951	973
TOTAL	**470**	**1.430**	**1.781**	**2.190**	**3.122**	**3.524**	**3.978**	**4.584**	**4.997**	**5.894**

Table 3. *The evolution of the number of financial auditors in Romania during 2000-2012*

The Romanian market of financial audit is mainly based on individuals with this profession representing, in each year of the analysis, more than 71% of all persons authorized to perform financial audit missions, despite the fact that the number of financial audit offices is increasing.

In Romania, there are required to audit the annual accounts all entities that, for two consecutive years from the date of the balance sheet, exceed the limits of at least two of the size criteria required by Minister of Public Finance Order no. 1802/2014 for approving the Accounting regulations regarding individual financial statements and consolidated financial statements: total assets – €3.650.000, net sales – €7.300.000, average number of employees during the financial year – 50 persons. If we make a comparative analysis with the Minister of Public Finance Order no. 3055/2009, repealed from 01.01.2015, we notice that there were kept the same criteria underlying a statutory audit mission.

In addition, according to the Accounting Law no. 82/1991, republished in 2014, are subject of statutory audit the financial statements prepared in order to perform operations of merger, demerger or liquidation and the ones of the legal persons of public interest. 16 years after the regulation of the financial audit activity, the Romanian market of financial audit is characterized by a dominance of the independent financial auditors and by a continuous increase of the number of the persons authorized to conduct financial audit missions. It can be concluded that the evolution of the financial audit services offered in Romania had developed in the way imposed by the existing demand on this market

4. Conclusions

As a result of the research conducted, we have identified a number of convergences and divergences in the area of financial audit in Romania and Spain.

Regarding the set of regulations in the field of financial audit, we noticed that Spain is a state with more tradition in this area compared to Romania. If, in Romania, this activity has been recognized and defined in the normative only in 2000s, in Spain there were conducted financial audit missions a decade earlier. This is due to the accession of Spain to the European Union before Romania, in 1986, reality which required alignment with the E.U. directives on financial audit.

However, a divergence is reflected in the different interpretation of the Directive 2006/43/EC: if, in Romania, there are performed financial audit activities according to the International Standards on Auditing (I.S.A.) since 2000, in Spain, the beginning of the harmonization process had occurred in 2010.

Although Spain has more experience in practicing the financial audit, the full implementation of the international auditing standards is realized more slowly compared to Romania.

The definition and the view offered to the financial audit represents, in essence, another similarity, this concept having the same meaning in both states, although, the Romanian definition of financial audit mentioned in G.E.O. no. 75/1999, republished, is much more complex and includes the statutory audit mission.

Regarding the regulation, organization and control of the financial audit activity, in both states there is an institution responsible to deal with these issues. Both, I.C.A.C. and C.A.F.R., are autonomous bodies that were founded with the first law in the field, operating in cooperation with the Ministry of Finance of each country and each one manages the access to the profession of financial auditor, organizing periodic examinations according to the law.

However, we noticed that Spain has one institution to regulate the accountancy profession and the financial audit, while, in Romania, there are two different bodies for each of the two professions: the Body of the Chartered Accountants and Certified Accountants and the Chamber of Financial Auditors.

There are differences concerning the conditions which must be fulfilled by an individual in order to acquire the status of financial auditor. Although both states require a university degree, a practical training ended with a professional skills exam, Spain is still more permissive, while Romania requires experience in the financial-accounting field of minimum 4 years or the title of chartered accountant or certified accountant with higher economic studies.

More specifically, the revised text of the Law on Auditing the Financial Statements allows the registration in the R.O.A.C. even if the person considered does not have a university degree as long as he or she owns the title needed for the inscription at a university and has a practical training of at least 8 years, five of them under the guidance of a financial auditor. Furthermore, Spain accepts any university degree, while Romania requires specifically economic studies.

However, in Romania, a financial auditor must respect the Code of Ethics issued by the I.F.A.C. As a convergence between the two countries, after passing the professional skills exam, the trainees are required to register in the Auditors Register and to accept the commitment to participate at continuous training sessions offered, in Romania, by the C.A.F.R., and, in Spain, by the I.C.A.C.

As regards the financial audit market, we noticed a different path in each state. From a general point of view, there were registered increases in both countries, but the pace and the actual values differ very much.

In Romania, there is a much more alert pace of growth of the number of financial auditors, while, in Spain, it was an explosion in the first years after the apparition of this profession and, after this moment, the financial audit market was shaped by the existing needs.

The Spanish financial audit market is characterized by a lot of audit companies since its beginning and by a relatively constant number of active individuals in the last 20 years and the Romanian one through a reduced number of audit offices (non-existent in 2000) and a continuous increase of the number of active financial auditors. The number of non-active financial auditors has increased in both states, but, in Spain exceeds, surprisingly, the number of the active ones 2.5 times, while, in Romania, is 6 times smaller compared to the number of active financial auditors.

Regarding the obligation to audit the financial statements, or the statutory audit, it was found a divergence between the two countries about the values of the size criteria imposed by the law, Spain requiring a smaller threshold for total assets and net sales than Romania, both for individual financial statements and consolidated financial statements.

In conclusion, in each one of the two countries, the financial audit appeared and developed according to the principle: „the financial audit is improving in a state in the pace of its economic development, as an answer to the challenges of the society it serves." (Pop 2013, 9).

Furthermore, we believe that each one of the two countries could represent a model for the other one within the area of financial audit. Spain is an example of tradition, of the numerous audit companies and of the large number of studies written in the field of financial audit.

On the other hand, although Romania does not have Spain's tradition in this area, it is a model of harmonization, in an alert and appropriate pace, of the national regulations with the European directives and the international audit standards.

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