

Achieving Sustainable Development Goals: the Role of the Accountancy Profession in Malta



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Problem Statement

The accountancy profession plays a significant role in furthering the achievement of the United Nation's (UN's) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, both internationally and locally, there is limited research about the implementation of such SDGs.

Research Approach

- This is a Qualitative research study, that was carried out by adopting a grounded theory methodological stance.
- Profound and rich insights were obtained about how accountants in Malta perceive their role in contributing towards the achievement of the UN's SDGs.

Project Overview

- The purpose of this research is to explore how the accountancy profession in Malta can contribute to furthering the achievement of eight SDGs that are particularly relevant for the accountancy profession.
- The research delves into what is currently being done by accountants in Malta, and recommendations were developed as to what further initiatives can be implemented by the accountancy profession to further contribute to the achievement of the UN's SDGs in Malta.

Research Objectives

- To analyse how the accountancy profession in Malta is contributing towards the achievement of the relevant SDGs;
- To discover the barriers to the Maltese accountancy profession's involvement in sustainable development activities; and
- To develop a set of recommendations concerning further initiatives that can be implemented by the accountancy profession in Malta with regards to the relevant SDGs.

Methodology



Research Propositions

- The main research propositions that emanate from the study are:
 - Research Proposition 1: a set of driving forces affect the Maltese accountancy profession's contribution towards the achievement of the UN's SDGs.
 - Research Proposition 2: the internal and external environments, within which the Maltese accountancy profession operates, influence the sustainable development initiatives that are being implemented.
 - Research Proposition 3: Maltese accountancy professionals tend to have a positive attitude towards sustainability, and they are willing to engage in initiatives that contribute towards the achievement of the UN's SDGs.
 - Research Proposition 4: Accountancy professionals in Malta are significantly contributing towards the achievement of SDGs 4, 5, 8 and 16.
 - Research Proposition 5: Maltese accountants collaborate with various stakeholders in implementing initiatives that contribute towards the achievement of the UN's SDGs.
 - Research Proposition 6: Maltese accountancy professionals are incurring both capital and revenue expenditure to implement initiatives that contribute towards the achievement of the UN's SDGs.
 - Research Proposition 7: the sustainable development initiatives which are being implemented by accountancy professionals in Malta create value for the profession, the business community and society in which they operate.
 - Research Proposition 8: there are certain barriers which the Maltese accountancy profession is encountering when engaging in sustainable development practices.

Key Figures



Figure 1 - (Source: United Nations 2015)

- Figure 1 illustrates the seventeen SDGs that were set by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015.
- These goals position sustainable development as a global challenge, that needs to be tackled by various stakeholders including governments, non-governmental organisations and business organisations.

References

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