"Profit, performance, perception": a research into the use of alternative performance measures in the European Union

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Preface

In 2006, I decided to take on the challenge of combining my already existing responsibilities as a senior manager in the audit and accounting & valuation advisory practices at PwC, as a lecturer in external reporting at the University of Amsterdam and as a young father of a beautiful daughter, Kayleigh, with a PhD. Unknowing of what this would exactly mean for me as a person and professional, but convinced that I would develop myself further in an area that was ‘out of my comfort zone’ in various aspects. In 2007, I therefore actually started with my PhD.

The last five years have been interesting and challenging with various highlights and lowlights. It has been five years in which amongst others I became father of Dylan and was promoted to director accounting and valuation advisory at PwC. During these five years, I have also consistently dealt with a balancing act of combining all priorities and responsibilities. Although a part-time PhD is very challenging in that regard, I would not have wanted to do it differently and believe that the combination of academic research and practical professional experience is important for ensuring that academic research is and remains relevant.

I am thankful to PwC for making this combination possible and supporting me in setting the right priorities, specifically Michael de Ridder, Ruud Dekkers, Leandro van Dam, Alexander Spek and Huub Wüst. I thank my supervisors, Henk Langendijk en Martin Hoogendoorn, who provided valuable advice during the whole process and showed trust in my ability to do this even during periods when literature research and data collection took a lot of time with limited visible output for them. Furthermore, my dissertation benefited from the input and advice from many people, including, but not limited to, Sanjay Bissessur, Wouter Glimmerveen, Igor Goncharov, Simon Lok, Erik Roelofsen, Thorsten Sellhorn, Jacques de Swart, Sander van Triest, David Veenman,
seminar participants at the University of Amsterdam, seminar participants at the 7th Workshop on European Financial Reporting, seminar participants at the 2012 International Accounting and Auditing Conference as well as from the Limperg financial accounting courses made possible by among others Jan Bouwens and Peter Easton. Finally, I thank my family and close friends for their support and the interest they have shown.

Kayleigh and Dylan, this is also for you although you are too young to understand what this is about and may never be interested in the topic at all. I hope and trust that you will also have ambitions during your life that you are enthusiastic and passionate about and I want to be there for you to show my support and interest in the things that are important for you now and in the future.