This thesis focuses on subjects of control and attitudinal outcomes of formalized control in organizations. More precisely, from the theoretical perspective of Adler and Borys’ concepts of enabling and coercive types of control, it directs attention to the concepts and practices of enabling and coercive types of control, and their relationship with attitudinal outcomes. This is done with a special interest in the banking industry, which serve as a case of an extensively regulated context where enabling and coercive control can be studied.

The findings of this thesis show that both enabling and coercive control can be found in banking, for example in the development and use of business plans and regulations. However, the picture emerging is more complex than enabling control leading to positive attitudes and coercive control leading to negative attitudes. Also, coexistence of enabling and coercive control may lead to tensions for the employee which is responded to with decoupling and acquiescence, and by drawing on global transparency. On the other hand, it may also lead to business opportunities, being positive for the employee.

This thesis contribute to the literature of enabling and coercive control in a number of ways. First, it provides an elaborated framework of enabling and coercive control by making explicit central concepts and relationships within the theory, such as design vs. perception, the role of zone of indifference as an outcome of control, and enabling and coercive control as dual roles or qualities of control. Moreover, this thesis suggests that multiple-level explanations to attitudinal outcomes of control, where contextual and institutional structures are considered, helps us understand attitudes to control in this context. Lastly, this thesis contribute to the notion of coexistence of enabling and coercive control by showing that coexistence can be simultaneous systems, and simultaneous cognitions, where a control can be perceived as both enabling and coercive at the same time.