

ENGAGE.EU Certificate
Joint Programme in Digital Transformation

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION AND PERFORMANCE

Course Syllabus

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Course Abstract

The course *Strategy Implementation and Performance* introduces students to practical methods for translating strategy into measurable objectives, coordinated actions, and organizational results. It focuses on the Balanced Scorecard and strategy maps as tools for clarifying strategic priorities, establishing cause-and-effect relationships, selecting relevant performance indicators, and supporting managerial decision-making.

The course examines how these tools can be applied in organizations undergoing digital transformation. Attention is given to the role of digital capabilities, data, and artificial intelligence in strategy execution, performance monitoring, and strategic adaptation. Rather than treating technology as an isolated topic, the course explores how it changes organizational objectives, processes, customer value, employee capabilities, and performance measures.

Through a structured case project, students will progressively develop a strategy map, define key performance indicators, propose strategic initiatives, and assess how the strategy should be adjusted when organizational conditions change. The course combines concise conceptual input with workshops, group discussion, case analysis, and practical design activities.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Explain the role of the Balanced Scorecard and strategy maps in translating strategy into organizational action.
- Formulate strategic objectives across the financial, customer, internal process, and learning and growth perspectives.
- Develop cause-and-effect relationships between strategic objectives and construct a coherent strategy map.

- Select relevant key performance indicators, targets, and strategic initiatives for monitoring strategy implementation.
- Assess how digital transformation, data, and artificial intelligence influence strategic objectives, organizational capabilities, and performance measurement.
- Adapt a strategy map and performance management system in response to changing organizational conditions.
- Critically evaluate strategy implementation decisions through case analysis, group discussion, and practical project work.

Evaluation and Grading

Assessment is based on continuous engagement, practical application, and the development of an integrated strategy implementation project.

- **Participation and in-class activities – 20%**
Active participation in discussions, case analyses, workshops, and peer-feedback activities.
- **Strategy implementation portfolio – 30%**
A set of practical outputs developed during the course, including strategic objectives, cause-and-effect relationships, selected KPIs, targets, and strategic initiatives.
- **Final case project and individual defence – 50%**
Students will develop and present an integrated strategy implementation framework for a selected organization or case. The project will include a strategy map, performance indicators, strategic initiatives, and recommendations for monitoring and adaptation. Individual understanding and contribution will be assessed through a short defence or reflection.

Grading follows the standard ECTS scale (A–F).

Readings

- 1) Kaplan, R., Norton, D. (1992). *Balanced Scorecard Success: The Kaplan-Norton Collection*. HBR Press.
- 2) Tawse, A., Tabesh, P. (2022). Thirty years with the balanced scorecard: What we have learned. *Business Horizons*, 66(1), 123–132.
- 3) Tanushev, C. (2022). Digital Transformation: The Impact on Corporate Strategy. *Economic Alternatives*, 28(3), 383–404.
- 4) Kalinkova, S. (2025). *Strategy Implementation and Organizational Performance: A Balanced Scorecard Approach*. Pub. House UNWE, Sofia.
- 5) Pirnay, L., Burnay, C. (2022). How to build data-driven Strategy Maps? *Data & Knowledge Engineering*, 139(11), DOI: 10.1016/j.datak.2022.102019.

Sessions

FIRST SESSION

From Strategy to Execution

- The strategy implementation challenge: why strategies fail during execution
- Translating strategic priorities into organizational objectives and actions

- Foundations of the Balanced Scorecard and its four perspectives
- The role of strategy maps in communicating and aligning strategy
- How digital transformation, data, and artificial intelligence influence strategic objectives and organizational capabilities

Case discussion: Identifying strategy implementation challenges in a digitally transforming organization.

Workshop: Students analyse a selected organization or case, define its main strategic challenge, and formulate preliminary objectives across the Balanced Scorecard perspectives.

Session output: Strategic diagnosis and an initial set of strategic objectives to be developed during the following sessions.

SECOND SESSION

Building the Strategy Map

- Translating strategic objectives into a coherent strategy map
- Developing cause-and-effect relationships across the Balanced Scorecard perspectives
- Clarifying the organization's value proposition and strategic priorities
- Identifying the digital capabilities, data resources, and organizational competencies required for strategy execution
- Common design errors in strategy maps and ways to improve strategic coherence

Case analysis: Evaluating an existing strategy map and identifying unclear objectives, weak causal links, and missing strategic capabilities.

Workshop: Students develop a strategy map for the organization or case selected during the first session. They connect strategic objectives across the four perspectives and explain the logic behind the proposed cause-and-effect relationships.

Peer feedback: Groups review each other's strategy maps and provide recommendations for improving clarity, alignment, and strategic consistency.

Session output: A completed draft strategy map that will serve as the basis for selecting KPIs, targets, and strategic initiatives in the following session.

THIRD SESSION

Measuring Strategy Implementation

- Translating strategic objectives into measurable performance indicators
- Distinguishing between leading and lagging indicators
- Selecting relevant KPIs across the Balanced Scorecard perspectives
- Defining targets, data sources, reporting frequency, and responsibility for performance monitoring
- Linking strategic objectives to initiatives, projects, and resource allocation
- Assessing the role of digital data and artificial intelligence in performance measurement and analysis

Case analysis: Reviewing a set of performance indicators and identifying measures that are unclear, operational rather than strategic, or insufficiently connected to organizational objectives.

Workshop: Students develop KPIs, targets, and strategic initiatives for the strategy map created during the second session. For each selected indicator, they define its purpose,

method of measurement, data source, reporting frequency, and responsible organizational unit.

Practical activity: Students examine AI-generated KPI suggestions and assess their relevance, measurability, reliability, and potential limitations.

Session output: A draft Balanced Scorecard containing strategic objectives, KPIs, targets, and corresponding strategic initiatives.

FOURTH SESSION

Monitoring, Adaptation and Strategic Learning

- Using the Balanced Scorecard as a system for strategic monitoring and managerial decision-making
- Interpreting performance results and identifying deviations from strategic targets
- Distinguishing between operational problems, implementation failures, and changes in strategic assumptions
- Using dashboards, data analytics, and artificial intelligence to support performance reviews and early warning
- Adapting strategic objectives, KPIs, targets, and initiatives in response to changing organizational conditions
- Addressing limitations and risks related to data quality, algorithmic bias, transparency, and managerial accountability

Scenario exercise: Students receive new information affecting the organization, such as a change in customer behaviour, the emergence of a digital competitor, a regulatory requirement, a technological disruption, or an unexpected decline in performance.

Workshop: Students analyse the implications of the new situation and revise the relevant elements of their strategy map and Balanced Scorecard. They identify corrective actions and explain whether the observed problem requires operational intervention, modification of strategic initiatives, or broader strategic adaptation.

Final presentation and individual defence: Students present their integrated strategy implementation framework, including the strategy map, KPIs, targets, strategic initiatives, monitoring approach, and proposed response to the scenario.

Session output: A completed and revised strategy implementation project demonstrating the ability to monitor performance, interpret strategic information, and adapt organizational action.

About the Lecturer

Dr. Sabrina Kalinkova is a Chief Assistant Professor at the University of National and World Economy (UNWE), Sofia, Bulgaria. She holds a PhD in Economics, with a specialization in planning, as well as Master's and Bachelor's degrees in Forecasting and Planning from UNWE.

Her teaching and research focus on strategic planning, strategy implementation, organizational performance, digital transformation, competitiveness, and data-driven decision-making. She teaches courses in Strategic Planning, Strategy Implementation and Performance, Data Analytics for Business, and related areas at undergraduate, graduate, and international programme level.

Dr. Kalinkova is the author of Strategy Implementation and Organizational Performance: A Balanced Scorecard Approach and has published research on strategic management, digital

competitiveness, input-output modelling, economic development, and the application of digital technologies and artificial intelligence in planning and decision-making.

Her work combines theoretical and practical perspectives, with particular emphasis on the use of strategy maps, performance indicators, simulation, and analytical tools to support strategy execution and organizational adaptation in complex and rapidly changing environments.