EMERGE Balanced Scorecard

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emerge

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Executive Summary

The EMERGE Balanced Scorecard (BSC) has been developed as a **shared strategic framework** to support the alignment, development, and long-term integration of the alliance's core values – **sustainability, inclusion, and resilience** – across partner universities. Building on established approaches to the Balanced Scorecard, the EMERGE model represents a **significant evolution in its application**: from a performance measurement system to a **learning-oriented governance framework** designed for a complex, multi-institutional environment.

At its core, the EMERGE BSC provides a **structured yet flexible architecture** that enables universities to translate shared strategic priorities into operational practice, while preserving institutional autonomy and diversity. It is explicitly designed to function not as an additional reporting mechanism, but as a **strategic alignment and sense-making tool**, supporting dialogue, reflection, and coordinated action across the alliance.

A Structured and Operational Framework for Alliance Alignment

The framework has now reached a **structured and integrative stage of development**, bringing together a comprehensive set of perspectives, performance areas, objectives, indicators, and illustrative initiatives within a coherent strategic architecture. This structure provides a **common language and reference framework** for aligning institutional strategies while respecting the complexity and diversity of partner universities.

The EMERGE BSC is organised around four adapted perspectives – **Resource, Social, Operational, and Development & Impact** – which collectively reflect the core functions and development priorities of higher education institutions. Within these perspectives, a set of **feasibility-informed objectives** has been developed through a participatory process involving all partner institutions. These objectives are supported by indicative indicators and illustrative initiatives, demonstrating how strategic priorities can be translated into concrete actions.

This structure functions as a **strategic backbone** for the BSC, enabling:

- Alignment across education, research, governance, and societal engagement,
- Integration of sustainability, inclusion, and resilience into core operations,
- Clear articulation of how institutional actions contribute to shared alliance goals.

Importantly, the framework is not prescriptive. Instead, it combines a **common strategic structure** at alliance level, and **flexible implementation pathways** at institutional level. This balance between **alignment and flexibility** is central to its design and ensures that the framework can be meaningfully applied across diverse institutional contexts.

From Measurement to Strategic Learning and Governance

A defining feature of the EMERGE BSC is its positioning as a **learning-oriented system rather than a performance monitoring tool**. While indicators and dashboards are included, their role is deliberately reframed. Indicators are used not as end-points for reporting, but as **entry points for interpretation, dialogue, and decision-making**.

This distinction is critical for higher education contexts. Universities operate in complex environments where performance cannot be fully captured through standardised metrics, and where overly rigid measurement systems risk constraining innovation and academic activity. The EMERGE approach therefore embeds indicators within a broader governance process that emphasises strategic dialogue and shared interpretation, reflection on progress and underlying assumptions, and continuous adaptation of objectives and actions. In this sense, the BSC supports a move from *control to coordination,* from *reporting to learning,* and from *standardisation to alignment with flexibility.* For leadership, this positions the BSC as a **strategic governance instrument**, supporting evidence-informed discussion and alignment across institutions without imposing uniformity or performance ranking.

Practical Value for Institutions and the Alliance

The EMERGE BSC provides immediate and tangible value for partner universities, particularly in supporting **strategic coherence and operational clarity**.

At institutional level, it enables universities to:

- Translate high-level strategic priorities into clear objectives and actions;
- Align initiatives across different functional areas and organisational levels;
- Strengthen evidence-informed decision-making through structured use of indicators;
- Integrate sustainability, inclusion, and resilience systematically into institutional strategies.

At alliance level, the framework supports:

- A **shared strategic direction** across diverse institutions,
- Structured **exchange of practices and experiences,**
- Identification of **common priorities and opportunities for joint action,**
- Strengthened capacity for **collective learning and innovation.**

Flexible and Contextualised Implementation

A key strength of the EMERGE BSC lies in its adaptable implementation model. While the framework provides a shared structure, its application at institutional level is based on **translation rather than replication**.

Following validation at alliance level, institutions will:

- Select relevant **shared objectives,**
- Define **context-specific baselines and targets,**
- Develop and implement **locally relevant initiatives,**
- Optionally introduce **additional objectives** reflecting institutional priorities.

This approach ensures **institutional ownership and relevance**, while avoiding superficial or compliance-driven implementation. Additionally, it recognises that to achieve relevance and feasibility across different institutions, it is essential to appreciate their unique capacities and starting points. At the same time, alignment is maintained through the adoption of common objectives and indicator frameworks. This is further supported by the shared dashboard environment which will provide structured opportunities for exchange and dialogue. In this model, diversity of implementation is not a limitation, but a **key resource for learning and innovation** across the alliance.

Governance and Next Steps (June-December 2026)

The next phase of development represents a critical transition from design to implementation. Between June and December 2026, the framework will undergo **formal validation by the Steering Committee**, establishing the basis for its adoption across the alliance.

This validation process will:

- Identify and endorse a **core set of alliance-level objectives,**
- Define a **manageable set of shared indicators,**
- Establish **principles for institutional adaptation and extension.**

Importantly, validation will not imply full standardisation. Instead, it will define a **common strategic reference framework**, within which institutions retain flexibility in implementation.

The Role of the Dashboard

The dashboard – currently developed as an illustrative prototype – will evolve into a **practical strategic tool** that supports both institutional use and alliance-level governance, while providing a shared environment for interpretation and learning.

Its primary functions will be to:

- Visualise relationships between **objectives, indicators, and initiatives,**
- Support **navigation of the framework,**
- Enable **structured reflection and dialogue,**
- Facilitate **knowledge sharing and peer learning.**

Conclusion

The EMERGE Balanced Scorecard provides a **robust, flexible, and forward-looking framework** for coordinating strategy across a diverse university alliance. Its strength lies in combining:

- A **clear and shared strategic structure,**
- **Flexibility for institutional adaptation,**
- A strong emphasis on **learning, dialogue, and continuous development.**

For senior leadership, it offers a practical and credible mechanism to embed core values into institutional practice and support evidence-informed governance and decision-making. For the alliance, it provides a tool for strengthened alignment across the partners' collective institutional development.

Its successful implementation will depend not only on its design, but on **active engagement and sustained use**. When embedded within governance processes and supported by leadership, the EMERGE BSC has the potential to function as a **shared strategic system**, enabling the alliance to move beyond coordination towards **collective transformation and long-term impact**.

Section 1: Introduction and Background

1. Introduction

Section 1 presents a condensed synthesis of findings from a substantive literature review conducted at the outset of the work on developing an EMERGE Balanced Scorecard.

1.1 Introduction: Towards a Learning-Oriented Balanced Scorecard

The **Balanced Scorecard (BSC)**, introduced by Kaplan and Norton (1992), has gained widespread adoption beyond its corporate origins, including in the higher education sector. Universities and colleges have adapted the BSC to align their strategies, monitor performance, and address sector-specific challenges such as academic quality, student satisfaction, financial sustainability, and institutional accountability.

Higher education institutions have modified the traditional BSC framework – comprising Financial, Customer, Internal Processes, and Learning & Growth perspectives – to reflect their specific objectives. In this context, the "Customer" perspective typically represents students and other stakeholders, while the "Financial" perspective focuses on funding, cost efficiency, and resource allocation.

Cullen, Joyce, Hassall, and Broadbent (2003) highlight both the opportunities and challenges associated with adapting the BSC to higher education. They emphasise the need to balance academic priorities with financial and operational sustainability, as well as the importance of aligning the framework with institutional missions. Beard (2009) similarly demonstrates that universities often expand the traditional BSC framework to include additional perspectives, such as research, community engagement, and sustainability.

The EMERGE Balanced Scorecard (BSC) is conceptualised as a **learning-oriented strategic framework** designed to support alignment, dialogue, and institutional development across a multi-university alliance. While the BSC has traditionally been applied as a performance management and monitoring tool, the EMERGE approach deliberately adopts an alternative interpretation, positioning it as a mechanism for *strategic translation and collective learning*, rather than control.

Within this approach, the BSC serves to translate shared values – particularly sustainability, inclusion, and resilience – as well as broader Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) ambitions into a *limited set of strategic themes*. These themes guide institutional development across education, research, societal engagement, and

organisational capacity. This positioning reflects the evolution of the Balanced Scorecard beyond purely financial metrics towards a multidimensional framework that integrates intangible assets and long-term value creation (Kaplan & Norton, 1996; Kumar et al., 2022).

Crucially, the EMERGE BSC does not prioritise measurement as an end-in-itself. Instead, indicators are positioned as **tools for reflection, interpretation, and dialogue**, supporting a shared understanding of progress without enforcing compliance or rigid standardisation. This perspective reflects a growing recognition in the literature that the value of the Balanced Scorecard lies not only in measurement, but also in its capacity to support **strategic alignment and organisational learning processes** (Hladchenko, 2015; De Freitas et al., 2021; Yawson & Paros, 2023).

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 The Balanced Scorecard as a Strategic Management Framework

The Balanced Scorecard was originally developed to address limitations in traditional performance measurement systems, particularly their reliance on financial indicators and their inability to capture intangible drivers of performance (Kaplan & Norton, 1996). Over time, it has evolved into a widely used **strategic management system**, enabling organisations to:

- translate strategic vision into operational objectives,
- align activities across organisational levels, and
- integrate financial and non-financial dimensions of performance.

In higher education, the BSC has been widely adopted to support **strategic planning, performance monitoring, and institutional accountability** (AlHosaini & Sofian, 2015; Hladchenko, 2015). Universities have adapted the traditional BSC perspectives – financial, customer, internal processes, and learning and growth -- to reflect sector-specific priorities, including:

- academic quality,
- research performance,
- student and stakeholder engagement, and
- institutional sustainability.

These adaptations demonstrate the flexibility of the BSC as a *structuring device for complex organisations*, particularly in contexts characterised by multiple missions and diverse stakeholder expectations.

2.2 Expansion Towards Sustainability, Inclusion, and Societal Impact

A key development in the evolution of the Balanced Scorecard has been its extension to incorporate *sustainability and societal impact*. The Sustainability Balanced Scorecard (SBSC) integrates environmental and social dimensions into strategic management, aligning organisational objectives with broader societal goals (Figge et al., 2002; Hansen & Schaltegger, 2016).

In higher education, this has translated into increasing efforts to align institutional strategies with environmental sustainability, social responsibility, inclusion and equity, and global policy frameworks such as the SDGs. Universities have used the BSC to embed sustainability across curriculum and teaching, research and innovation, campus operations, and community engagement. Similarly, inclusion has been incorporated into strategic frameworks through indicators related to access and participation, diversity of students and staff, inclusive teaching practices, and institutional climate.

These developments highlight the role of the BSC as a mechanism for *translating normative ambitions into structured strategic frameworks*. At the same time, they raise important questions regarding how such ambitions are operationalised in practice.

2.3 Tensions and Limitations in Higher Education Contexts

The application of the Balanced Scorecard in higher education requires careful adaptation to the complex and dynamic nature of universities. Academic literature consistently highlights that traditional performance indicators often fail to capture key dimensions of academic work and are therefore of limited value in representing institutional complexity (Ruben, 1999). At the same time, the introduction of performance measurement frameworks, including the BSC, has been associated with forms of managerialism that risk reducing academic activity to measurable outputs (Camilleri, 2021).

These challenges are further amplified by the fact that universities operate in highly dynamic, multi-stakeholder environments, characterised by uncertainty, competing expectations, and evolving societal roles. While measurement remains important, the central issue is not whether to measure, but what is measured and how that information is used to support strategic learning and alignment. An overly narrow focus on indicators and dashboards may therefore hinder, rather than support, the capacity of universities to respond to complexity, innovate, and fulfil their broader societal missions.

Despite its advantages, the application of the BSC in higher education is characterised by several key tensions:

Indicator-driven simplification

The BSC's emphasis on indicators may lead to the **oversimplification of complex academic activities**, particularly in areas such as teaching quality, research impact, and societal engagement (Ruben, 1999; AlHosaini & Sofian, 2015).

Managerialism and commodification

Critical research suggests that the use of frameworks such as the BSC may contribute to the **commodification of education and academic labour**, reinforcing managerial logics and performance cultures (Lawrence & Sharma, 2002).

Limited support for organisational learning

Although the BSC includes a "learning and growth" perspective, learning is often framed as an **instrument supporting pre-defined strategy**, rather than as an open-ended process of reflection and adaptation. This limits its capacity to support deeper forms of organisational learning and innovation.

Challenges of complexity and diversity

Higher education institutions operate in **complex and dynamic environments** characterised by:

- multiple missions,
- loosely coupled organisational structures, and
- diverse stakeholder expectations.

Standardised measurement systems may therefore struggle to capture institutional diversity and context-specific priorities.

2.4 Repositioning the Balanced Scorecard: A Tool for Organisational Learning and Strategy-as-Practice

In response to these limitations, the EMERGE framework adopts a *learning-oriented interpretation of the Balanced Scorecard*. Rather than a focusing on producing a performance monitoring system, this perspective presents a BSC that functions primarily as:

- a **strategic translation tool**,
- a **framework for dialogue**, and
- a **structure for collective sense-making**.

Its central contribution lies in providing a recognisable and shared structure through which the EMERGE mission and values can be translated into strategic themes, while maintaining flexibility in implementation.

This approach aligns with literature emphasising the importance of *contextualisation and adaptation* of the BSC in higher education settings (De Freitas et al., 2021; Mendes Junior & Alves, 2023). It also resonates with sustainability-oriented research, which highlights the need to integrate normative goals into strategic management frameworks without reducing them to narrow performance metrics (Mio et al., 2022).

The Balanced Scorecard and Organisational Learning

Although originally developed as a strategic performance framework, the Balanced Scorecard has increasingly been interpreted as a tool that can support *organisational learning processes*. At its core, the BSC links strategic objectives with operational activities and provides feedback mechanisms through which organisations can monitor progress and adapt their strategies over time (Kaplan & Norton, 1996; Kumar et al., 2022).

In this sense, the Balanced Scorecard can be understood as enabling single-loop learning, where organisations make incremental adjustments within an existing strategic framework. However, organisational learning theory suggests that deeper forms of learning are required in complex environments. Argyris and Schön (1978) distinguish between:

- **single-loop learning** (adjusting actions), and
- **double-loop learning** (questioning underlying assumptions and strategies).

From this perspective, the BSC has the potential – if used reflexively – to support not only performance adjustment but also *critical reflection on strategic priorities*. However, empirical studies suggest that this potential is not always realised. When the BSC is used primarily as a measurement and reporting tool, learning remains

limited and instrumental (De Freitas et al., 2021; Mendes Junior & Alves, 2023). By contrast, when embedded in dialogue-oriented practices, the BSC can support shared interpretation, reflection, and organisational learning. Hladchenko (2015) shows that in higher education, the BSC can function as a strategic management and learning system, particularly when it is used to facilitate communication and alignment rather than control.

This distinction is particularly important in universities. Higher education institutions operate in environments characterised by complexity, uncertainty, and competing institutional logics. Under such conditions, strategy cannot be fully predefined. Instead, learning-oriented approaches are required that enable institutions to:

- reinterpret priorities,
- respond to emerging challenges, and
- adapt strategic direction over time (Lozano, 2006; Leal Filho et al., 2018).

Strategy-as-Practice and the Role of the Balanced Scorecard

The learning-oriented interpretation of the Balanced Scorecard aligns closely with **strategy-as-practice (SAP)** perspectives, which conceptualise strategy not as a fixed plan, but as something that is enacted through everyday organisational practices (Whittington, 2006). From a strategy-as-practice perspective:

- strategy is continuously constructed through interaction and interpretation,
- organisational actors at multiple levels contribute to strategy formation, and
- tools such as the Balanced Scorecard function as “strategic devices” that shape how strategy is understood and performed.

In this regard, the Balanced Scorecard does not merely represent strategy – it actively structures strategic practice. By defining perspectives, objectives, and indicators, it creates a shared language through which organisational actors engage in strategic dialogue. In higher education, this function is particularly significant. Universities are characterised by decentralised governance structures, strong academic autonomy, and collegial decision-making processes. As a result, strategy emerges through distributed practices, including committees and working groups, academic and administrative negotiations, and iterative processes of interpretation and adaptation.

Research on the application of the BSC in universities shows that it supports:

- alignment of institutional and operational activities,
- communication across organisational levels, and
- coordination of diverse stakeholder interests (Al-Hosaini & Sofian, 2015; Cullen et al., 2003).

However, critical perspectives highlight that such tools can also impose managerial logics if used rigidly. Lawrence and Sharma (2002) argue that performance frameworks such as the BSC may contribute to the *commodification of academic work* if applied without sensitivity to institutional context.

From a strategy-as-practice perspective, the implication is clear: *the impact of the BSC depends not on its design alone, but on* ***how it is used in practice****.*

Implications for a Learning-Oriented EMERGE Balanced Scorecard

The integration of organisational learning and strategy-as-practice perspectives reinforces the conceptual positioning of the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard as a **learning-oriented and dialogical framework**. First, it highlights that the value of the BSC lies not only in its structural components, but in the *processes through which these are interpreted, negotiated, and enacted*. Strategy is not simply translated into action; it is continuously shaped through practice.

Second, it underscores the importance of **participation and interaction**. A learning-oriented BSC requires engagement from institutional actors across different levels, enabling *co-construction of strategy* rather than top-down implementation. This aligns with broader literature on sustainability and higher education, which emphasises participatory and systemic approaches to institutional transformation (Lozano, 2006; Corazza et al., 2024).

Third, it supports the idea that **diversity of implementation is a resource**. Within the EMERGE alliance, different universities will interpret and apply strategic themes in contextually specific ways. From a learning and strategy-as-practice perspective, these variations are not deviations, but:

- sources of experimentation,
- opportunities for comparison, and
- drivers of collective learning.

This aligns with recent work on European university alliances, which emphasises the importance of *shared frameworks combined with institutional diversity* (Angouri & Delmas, 2025).

Fourth, it reinforces the role of indicators as **interpretive resources rather than control mechanisms**. Indicators support strategy not by prescribing behaviour, but by:

- focusing attention,
- providing evidence, and
- enabling structured reflection.

This perspective resonates with sustainability measurement literature, which highlights that indicators should support *decision-making and learning rather than compliance alone* (Mio et al., 2022; Basheer et al., 2025).

From Performance Measurement to Learning System

Taken together, these perspectives support a fundamental shift in how the Balanced Scorecard is understood and applied. Rather than functioning primarily as a performance measurement system, the BSC can be conceptualised as part of a broader **organisational learning system**. In this interpretation, it contributes to:

- **Strategic alignment** through a shared conceptual structure
- **Organisational learning** through feedback, reflection, and adaptation
- **Strategy-as-practice** through structured interaction and dialogue

This shift is particularly relevant in the context of the EMERGE alliance, where:

- coordination must be achieved across multiple autonomous institutions,
- diversity must be preserved rather than eliminated, and
- shared values must be translated into meaningful and context-sensitive action.

A learning-oriented Balanced Scorecard provides a framework that enables these objectives to be pursued simultaneously. It supports a form of governance based not on control and standardisation, but on: *shared orientation, collective learning, and adaptive strategy development*. In this sense, the EMERGE BSC represents not simply an adaptation of an existing management tool, but a **reconceptualisation of the Balanced Scorecard as a learning-oriented, practice-based strategic framework**.

2.5 The EMERGE Model: Alignment, Flexibility, and Learning

The EMERGE Balanced Scorecard operationalises this perspective through three core principles:

Shared strategic orientation

The framework provides a common structure across the alliance, ensuring coherence in how sustainability, inclusion, and resilience are interpreted and operationalised.

Contextual flexibility

Individual institutions select and adapt objectives and indicators based on their specific contexts, capacities, and priorities. This reflects the need for institutional autonomy and diversity within higher education systems.

Collective learning

The diversity of institutional approaches is treated as a source of learning. By comparing experiences and sharing practices, the alliance functions as a distributed learning system, consistent with broader understandings of strategic management as an iterative and adaptive process.

2.6 Conclusion

The EMERGE Balanced Scorecard represents an **advanced, theory-informed adaptation** of the BSC:

- *Moving from **measurement → learning***
- *From **control → dialogue***
- *From **standardisation → alignment with flexibility***

It provides a robust framework for coordinating strategy across a university alliance while preserving institutional diversity and supporting collective learning. The EMERGE Balanced Scorecard represents an evolved application of the BSC concept, moving beyond performance measurement towards a learning-oriented, value-driven, and networked strategic framework. By integrating insights from strategic management, sustainability frameworks, and higher education research, it provides a structured yet flexible approach to coordinating institutional development across a university alliance. Its effectiveness, however, depends on maintaining its learning-oriented character, ensuring that indicators support reflection and dialogue rather than control and compliance.

3. Methodological Framework for Alliance-Level Implementation

3.1 Purpose and methodological positioning

The EMERGE Balanced Scorecard (BSC) is designed as a shared strategic framework to support alignment, learning, and coordinated action across a multi-institutional university alliance. Consistent with its original conceptualisation, the Balanced Scorecard is not treated primarily as a performance measurement dashboard, but as a **strategic management system** that translates vision into action and aligns organisational activities with long-term goals (Kaplan & Norton, 1996).

The methodological approach extends this understanding to a networked context, recognising that university alliances operate as complex, multi-level systems characterised by distributed decision-making and diverse institutional contexts. Accordingly, the EMERGE BSC combines common strategic direction with local flexibility while fostering collective learning across partner institutions.

3.2 Conceptual foundations

The methodology is grounded in the established literature on the Balanced Scorecard as a strategic management and organisational development framework. The BSC was originally developed to overcome the limitations of traditional performance measurement systems, particularly their over-reliance on financial indicators and their inability to capture intangible assets and long-term value creation (Kaplan & Norton, 1996; Hristov & Chirico, 2016).

Subsequent developments positioned the BSC as an integrated system for describing, communicating, and implementing strategy (Kaplan, 2010). It operates by linking strategic objectives to operational activities and by creating feedback loops that enable organisations to test, adapt, and refine their strategies over time. This interpretive and learning-oriented function is central to the methodological design of the EMERGE framework.

Contemporary research further emphasises the BSC's role in aligning organisational goals with mission and strategy, and in supporting communication and decision-making processes across complex organisational settings (Yawson & Paros, 2023). These features are particularly relevant in multi-partner alliances, where alignment must be achieved without centralised control.

3.3 Adaptation to higher education systems

The application of the Balanced Scorecard to universities requires careful adaptation to the specific characteristics of higher education institutions. Universities operate in complex and dynamic environments, characterised by multiple missions (education, research, and societal engagement), diverse stakeholder expectations, and loosely coupled organisational structures (Kiriri, 2022).

Research in higher education has highlighted the limitations of traditional performance indicators in capturing the full scope of academic work and institutional impact. In particular, purely quantitative measures often fail to capture qualitative dimensions such as knowledge development, societal engagement, and long-term impact (Ruben, 1999). This necessitates a broader and more flexible approach to performance and strategy.

At the same time, the introduction of performance frameworks such as the BSC has been associated with concerns about managerialism in higher education. While the BSC provides a comprehensive and structured approach to performance management, empirical research shows that the use of standardised indicators can present both strengths and limitations, particularly when applied to academic environments (Camilleri, 2021). Overly rigid or metric-driven applications may risk reducing academic activities to measurable outputs, thereby neglecting their qualitative and exploratory nature.

For this reason, the EMERGE methodology explicitly avoids treating the Balanced Scorecard as a uniform performance measurement system. Instead, it is applied as a **flexible strategic framework** that supports alignment and learning while respecting institutional diversity.

3.4 Core design principle: alignment with flexibility

The EMERGE Balanced Scorecard is structured around four perspectives and eight performance areas, which together provide a shared strategic architecture for the alliance. These perspectives define the core domains of institutional performance and development, ensuring that all partner universities operate within a common conceptual framework.

At the same time, the methodology explicitly recognises that universities differ in their contexts, priorities, and capacities. Flexibility is therefore embedded in the implementation model. Individual institutions are not required to adopt identical objectives or indicators. Instead, they select from a broader set of strategically relevant objectives and indicators that best reflect their local contexts.

This approach reflects a deliberate distinction between **strategic alignment** and **operational standardisation**. While alignment is pursued at the alliance level, standardisation is intentionally avoided in order to preserve institutional autonomy and ensure contextual relevance.

3.5 Feasibility-driven objective selection

A central methodological component of the EMERGE BSC is the feasibility assessment of potential objectives across the alliance. Rather than imposing a fixed set of objectives, the framework applies a participatory process through which objectives are evaluated in relation to their relevance and feasibility across partner institutions. This process results in the development of ‘shopping lists’ of objectives within each performance area.

These lists serve several important functions:

- they identify objectives that are broadly feasible across institutions,
- they enable partner universities to select objectives aligned with their specific contexts, and
- they provide a basis for identifying common priorities where stronger alignment is possible.

This approach strengthens both the **legitimacy** and **implementability** of the framework by grounding strategic choices in institutional realities while maintaining a shared strategic direction.

3.6 The alliance as a learning system

Consistent with the conceptual foundations of the Balanced Scorecard as a strategic learning system, the EMERGE BSC is explicitly designed to support collective learning across the alliance. Partner universities are expected to pursue different combinations of objectives and initiatives, creating a diversity of implementation pathways.

This diversity is treated as a resource rather than a challenge. By comparing experiences, identifying effective practices, and sharing lessons learned, the alliance can develop a cumulative understanding of how to advance its strategic priorities.

This aligns with the broader literature on the BSC as a tool for organisation development and change, which emphasises its role in supporting learning processes, facilitating alignment, and enabling adaptive strategy implementation (Yawson & Paros, 2023).

3.7 Role of indicators and dashboards

Indicators and dashboards are included within the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard, but their role is **clearly defined and deliberately limited**. They function as tools for:

- informing strategic discussion,
- supporting reflection, and
- providing evidence for decision-making.

They do **not** constitute the core purpose of the framework.

This positioning directly addresses a well-documented limitation in the literature: the tendency to reduce the Balanced Scorecard to a performance measurement system. Such a reduction risks undermining its strategic value and constraining its ability to support learning and alignment.

In the EMERGE framework, indicators are embedded within a broader **interpretive and governance process**, where their meaning is actively discussed and contextualised rather than simply reported.

3.8 Conclusion

The EMERGE Balanced Scorecard represents a **networked and adaptive application** of the BSC concept within a higher education context. It extends established theoretical foundations by incorporating flexibility, feasibility-driven design, and collective learning into a coherent methodological framework.

In doing so, it directly addresses key critiques of traditional performance measurement systems while aligning with contemporary understandings of the Balanced Scorecard as a strategic management and learning tool. The resulting approach provides a **robust, context-sensitive framework** for coordinating strategy across a diverse university alliance.

4. Governance Perspective: From Dashboard to Strategic Learning System in Higher Education

The EMERGE Balanced Scorecard (BSC) should not be understood primarily as a dashboard for monitoring indicators. Rather, academic literature consistently emphasises that dashboards represent only a limited and visible layer of a broader strategic management system. The Balanced Scorecard was originally conceived not merely as a performance measurement framework, but as a mechanism to translate strategy into coordinated action, align organisational actors, and support ongoing strategic learning.

Kaplan and Norton (1996) argue that the Balanced Scorecard is "more than a measurement system… [it is] a management system", enabling organisations to align activities with long-term strategic goals. This interpretation is reinforced in later work, where Kaplan (2010) describes the BSC as a tool for "describing, communicating and implementing strategy", thereby highlighting its central role in governance rather than passive monitoring.

Within this perspective, dashboards and indicators function as inputs into a broader strategic process. The Balanced Scorecard integrates financial and non-financial measures to provide a comprehensive view of organisational performance, linking strategy to operations and enabling feedback, alignment, and continuous improvement (Kaplan & Norton, 1996; Kaplan & Norton, 2000). More recent research similarly recognises the BSC as a strategic management system that supports alignment, communication, and organisational development, rather than simply measurement (Yawson & Paros, 2023).

At the governance level, this has important implications. The value of the Balanced Scorecard lies less in reporting performance indicators and more in enabling structured reflection on whether objectives, actions, and resource allocations are aligned with agreed priorities. In this sense, the BSC supports a form of **strategic learning**, in which performance information is used to test, adapt, and refine strategy over time.

4.1 Limitations and Governance Challenges in Higher Education

While these principles are well established, their implementation in higher education raises a number of governance challenges. Rather than repeating the full theoretical discussion, these can be synthesised into a set of key concerns relevant for governance:

- *Oversimplification through indicators*

  The complexity of academic work—particularly in teaching quality, research impact, and societal engagement—cannot be fully captured through standard performance indicators.

- *Risk of managerialism and commodification*

  Indicator-driven systems may reinforce managerial logics, potentially reducing academic activity to measurable outputs and neglecting broader educational and societal values.

- *Instrumental use of measurement*

  When the BSC is treated primarily as a reporting tool, it tends to support only limited, incremental learning rather than deeper reflection on strategic priorities.

- *Mismatch with institutional complexity*

  Universities operate in multi-dimensional, loosely coupled systems with diverse stakeholders, making standardised measurement approaches inherently limited.

- *Risk of rigidity and reduced adaptability*

  Overly fixed indicator frameworks may constrain innovation and hinder responsiveness in dynamic and uncertain environments.

Taken together, these challenges suggest that the central issue is not whether universities should use indicators, but **how indicators are embedded within governance processes**. Measurement becomes meaningful only when it supports interpretation, dialogue, and strategic decision-making.

4.2 Implications for Governance in EMERGE

For the EMERGE alliance, these insights imply a clear positioning of the Balanced Scorecard as a **strategic learning and alignment framework**, rather than a performance monitoring tool.

In this model:

- indicators support governance, but do not define it;
- dashboards provide inputs, but not conclusions; and
- strategic value emerges through interpretation, interaction, and use.

The dashboard is therefore only one component within a broader governance architecture that includes:

- structured strategic dialogue,
- shared interpretation of priorities, and
- coordinated action across partner institutions.

At alliance level, the Balanced Scorecard functions as a **coordination and governance framework** rather than a control mechanism. It supports structured

dialogue on strategic priorities, facilitates alignment across institutions, and enables monitoring of progress without enforcing uniformity. Importantly, the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard is **not intended as a tool for performance comparison or ranking**. Instead, it serves to:

- support alignment between priorities, objectives, and actions;
- enable evidence-informed governance discussions;
- facilitate learning across diverse institutional contexts; and
- strengthen the alliance's capacity to respond to complexity and change.

Section 2: EMERGE Balanced Scorecard Framework

Following the literature review, the task group began to work on developing a BSC framework that would be appropriate for the EMERGE alliance and specifically focus on the integration and mainstreaming of the values of sustainability, inclusion and resilience across our university's operations. This work was based on an iterative and discursive process to elaborate both a structure and process that would work well within the context of the EMERGE alliance and for each of the individual universities.

Initially, this work was guided by considering the standard approach for developing a Balanced Scorecard as a model designed to translate organisational mission and strategy into a coherent set of **objectives** and **indicators**, integrating *strategic direction* with *implementation and monitoring*. While primarily a strategic management tool, the model should also incorporate learning-oriented assumptions related to organisational development and capability building.

Traditionally, the Balanced Scorecard is built around four interrelated perspectives: financial, customer or stakeholder, internal processes, and learning and growth. The first step of elaboration on this structure begins with defining **strategic objectives** within each perspective – these aim to translate strategic vision into the practical achievements that an organisation intends to achieve. For each objective, **performance indicators** are identified to measure something that with indicate positive movement towards this objective. An initial measure of the indicator is taken to establish a **baseline**, and then a **target** achievement for each indicator is set against this baseline for a defined timeframe. The final step in Balanced Scorecard development is selecting specific **initiatives** that will be implemented to support achievement of the target and the objective. Over time, it is necessary to review each of these components and consider updating or changing them. Initiatives and targets require the most regular revision.

A key feature of the model is its emphasis on cause-and-effect relationships across perspectives, often visualised through strategy maps. The underlying logic is largely linear and instrumental but includes feedback mechanisms intended to support review and adjustment over time.

5. Process for Developing the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard Framework

The working group developed a staged approach for developing the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard framework based on the traditional logical flow of Balanced Scorecard. When applying the traditional, four perspective structure of the Balanced Scorecard, there are four linear steps to defining a BSC framework: objectives → indicators → targets → initiatives.

The working group defined a total of seven steps for the use of a Balanced Scorecard framework in the EMERGE alliance. The first three steps are concerned with the adaptation of the BSC structure to ensure its relevance for the alliance, while the later four steps follow the standard logical flow of the traditional model.

1. Clarify the overall **purpose** of the EMERGE Balance Scorecard;
2. Define the main **perspectives/dimensions** of the framework – based on an adapted version of the traditional BSC;
3. Clarify key aspects or **performance areas** under each dimension;
4. Map and identify possible **objectives** for inclusion in the BSC framework;
5. Identify appropriate **measures/indicators** of performance towards the specific objectives;
6. Establish the current **baseline** levels at each institution, and determine the desired **target** level of achievement individually per institution;
7. Set context-relevant **initiatives** in the form of projects or actions that will be taken by each institution to support the achievement of the target and/or objective.

This initial process framing also required discussion among partners on which of the following features would be commonly defined for application across the alliance, and which of these should maintain a level of flexibility for context-relevant selection and adaptation by individual alliance members. This specific issue created the strongest contention among the partners. It was agreed that the overall structure of the framework (i.e. steps 1-3) could clearly be commonly defined. It was also agreed that, as the baseline at different institutions would inherently be different, appropriate targets and initiatives (i.e. steps 6-7) would need to be context-relevant and defined by individual universities. The main contention was concerted around the identification of objectives and indicators (i.e. steps 4-5) and most specifically if the working group could prescribe a set of objectives and indicators to be adopted across the alliance without undergoing formal processes of governance and decision making at each institution.

6. Aim and Purpose of the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard Framework

At the outset of the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) development process, it was necessary to clarify what the framework should support and make visible. This involved reflecting on the overall mission, vision, and values of EMERGE; the positioning of this assignment within the work package focussed on creating a sustainable, inclusive and resilient campus; the diverse thematic priorities across the project's work packages; and the complexity of operational activities across partner universities.

Given the wide range of existing objectives and performance indicators already developed within the EMERGE project, it was clear that the role of the BSC should not be to replicate or add further reporting burdens. Instead, the framework is positioned as a **strategic learning and alignment tool**, designed to articulate and support the alliance's longer-term ambition of evolving beyond a project-based collaboration towards a federated institutional model grounded in shared values and high societal impact.

The main aim of the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard Framework is therefore defined as follows:
*The EMERGE Balanced Scorecard provides a strategic framework for translating and expressing the alliance's vision of robust campuses, in which the values of sustainability, inclusion, and resilience are **ingrained across university operations**. These values are intended to become a defining feature of the lived experience of students and staff, while also shaping community engagement and contributing to broader societal impact.*

In addition, the purpose of the framework can be clarified as follows: *The EMERGE Balanced Scorecard offers a forward-looking and indicative model that demonstrates what the full integration and mainstreaming of sustainability, inclusion, and resilience across university operations might look like in practice, and how these can be strengthened as core value propositions for enhancing societal impact.*

This conceptual positioning also seeks to activate a **triple-loop learning process**, in which attention extends beyond incremental improvements in existing actions to include reflection on the underlying assumptions shaping these actions, as well as the broader social contexts in which they are embedded. In this sense, the EMERGE BSC supports a learning process that enables the reframing and transformation of institutional norms and practices, while simultaneously guiding alignment across the alliance.

This is further supported through an implementation approach that combines a **shared structural framework across the alliance** with **flexibility for contextual adaptation at the institutional level**. Through this combination, diversity in implementation becomes a resource, contributing to a more dynamic and generative learning process across the EMERGE alliance.

7. Main Structure of the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard Framework

Initially, it was decided that it would be important to determine an adapted structure for the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard that would allow it to adequately translate the alliance's mission for social engagement and the values of sustainability, inclusion and resilience effectively into this BSC framework. Various models were drafted and discussed with consideration towards how well they would support the defined purpose.

After considering the possibility of using the traditional four BSC perspectives and adding additional perspectives for each of the values – sustainability, inclusion and resilience, it was determined that this approach was not effective as it treated the values separately from the main operational areas. However, it was also clear that the traditional perspectives did not adequately meet the needs of the universities in the EMERGE alliance or support the overall purpose for this framework.

Following the logic of the four traditional perspectives of the BSC, an adapted framework for the EMERGE BSC was developed that better recognises both the operational areas of higher education institutions and the mission and value-based proposal of the EMERGE alliance. We maintained the logic of the four traditional perspectives, but each was modified to better apply within the context of EMERGE. In addition, each perspective was divided into two corresponding performance areas to provide a more holistic representation of the operational areas of concern for universities within the alliance. This structure with four adapted perspectives and eight total performance areas supports a more holistic recognition of the main operational areas of our universities, as well as a more nuanced mapping of how the three values can be integrated across our institutional environments.

Table 1: Perspectives and Performance Areas of the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard

Traditional BSC Perspectives	EMERGE BSC Perspectives	EMERGE BSC Performance Areas	Focus for each performance area
Financial Perspective	Resource Perspective	Economic Performance	Efficient use of resources and financial sustainability.
		Ecological Performance	Green management of campus and resources.
Customer (Stakeholder) Perspective	Social Perspective	Student & Staff Performance	Satisfaction and success of students and staff.
		External Stakeholders & Partnership	Quality and value of engagement with external partners.
Internal Processes Perspective	Operational Perspective	Education & Research Performance	Quality and excellence in education and research.
		Administration & Governance Performance	Sustainability, inclusion and resilience in administrative operations, governance and organisational management.
Learning and Growth Perspective	Development & Impact Perspective	Development, Innovation & Improvement	Capacity for development, innovation, and continuous improvement.
		Value of Societal Impact	Achievement of positive societal impact.

8. Defining Objectives and Indicators

The efforts to define objective and indicators for the framework has undergone a multi-step process. As the setting of objectives within a Balanced Scorecard serves as the essential element in the translation of strategic vision and priorities into practical actions, two separate rounds of individual feedback from each partner institution were conducted to ensure a high relevance and feasibility of proposed objectives for all partners.

This process began with a scoping activity – supported by the literature review – to identify a large selection of objectives that were appropriate for each performance area. In this iteration, objectives were considered across five different criteria: sustainability-embedded objectives, inclusion-embedded objectives, resilience-embedded objectives, general objectives (highlighting standard features of this performance area), and simple objectives that could incorporate multiple values into one. In total, this process generated a total list of 224 potential objectives.

In a first assessment round, each partner was asked to prioritise five objectives per performance area that they found to have the strongest relevance both for their university's context and for the aims of the EMERGE alliance. The results from this process led to a first shortlisting of 141 objectives in total. However, if only counting those objectives selected by at least half of the respondents (demonstrating a majority relevance across the network), the number of objectives already drops to 32 – or around 3-5 objectives per performance area.

Based on the results of this first assessment round, more detailed information was prepared for all 141 objectives. For each potential objective, information was provided on; its background and relevance, the values it supports, examples of relevant indicators, and possible initiatives that could be enacted to support this objective. Additionally, for each performance area, a further critical review was made regarding the overlaps and thematic clustering of these objectives, their overall coverage of core issues related to this performance area, clarification on with objectives stood out as strategic objectives and which serve more as enabling instruments, and on opportunities for merging and reframing the objectives to reduce the total number to a smaller core set of strategic objectives (see Annex 1 for outcomes of this critical review).

In the second assessment round, each partner was asked to conduct a feasibility assessment of each of these objectives. For this assessment, partners were informed that at this point they were not indicating preference for individual objectives, but rather they were to assess, "If their university did adopt this objective, how feasible would it be for them to take it on and begin doing work for improving on this objective?" Partners were asked to indicate their assessment based on the following traffic-light schema.

Assessment Ranking	Feasibility	Time Frame for Adoption
1. Green	Would be straightforward to adopt and operationalise.	Could be adopted in 1-2 years.
2. Amber	Would require some initial groundwork and efforts to make adoption possible.	Could be adopted in 3-5 years.
3. Red	Without major changes to our systems, this would be difficult to adopt.	Difficult to adopt in next 5 years.

8.1 Outcomes of Feasibility-assessed Objectives

The results of both the 1st round prioritisation and 2nd round feasibility assessment by all partners were compiled to produce average scores and assessment values at the alliance level. It is important to note that the prioritisation of an objective and the feasibility assessment of the same objective by an individual university may not correspond with an equally high result in both cases. Some objectives prioritised for have high relevance and potential value for adoption may be judged as potentially difficult to implement in practice. At the same time, while a higher feasibility score indicates a stronger viability for adopting these objectives commonly across the alliance, it does not specifically indicate that those objectives are specifically perceived to have the highest potential value for adoption. Some objectives that have a low feasibility score – meaning that they would be difficult to operationalise within current university systems – could actually result in much more significant and meaningful changes in overall systems if they could be achieved.

Table 2 presents a full summary of the outcomes from these two assessment rounds. Table 3 provides a list of the five objective per performance area with the highest average feasibility scores. However, in this table, it is also indicated when a specific objective has received a red feasibility assessment by one or more partners as this raises potential concern for its overall adoption as a common objective for the alliance. Table 4 provides a list of top assessed objective where any objectives with one or more red assessment have been excluded, thus providing the most useful list for review during validation process to select common objectives and indicators for the alliance.

Table 2: Summary of prioritisation and feasibility-assessment across alliance

This table shows the compiled results of both the 1st round prioritisation and 2nd round feasibility assessment by all partners. The initial prioritisation column indicates the total percentage of partners prioritising this objective as relevant and meaningful for their institution. The average feasibility score is based on the following values: green = 2, amber = 1, and red = 0.

Perspective	Area	Objective	Initial Prioritisation (% of partners)	Average Feasibility Score	Common Feasibility Rating
Resource Perspective	Economic Performance	Expand mission driven collaboration with industry, foundations, and civic partners	88%	1.89	
		Increase participation and success rates in major EU funding programmes	63%	1.44	
		Inclusive mobility top ups and hardship funds	50%	0.89	
		Enhance financial resilience through risk aware budgeting and reserves	38%	1.00	
		Sustainable procurement standards across categories	38%	1.00	
		Shift travel budgets to low carbon modes	38%	0.89	
		Strengthen long term financial sustainability through diversified funding models	25%	0.78	
		Develop shared services to reduce operational costs across the alliance	25%	0.44	
		Inclusive procurement and social value clauses	25%	0.56	
		Increase efficiency of internal resource allocation through evidence based prioritisation	13%	1.11	
		Scale shared services and joint procurement	13%	0.33	
		Portfolio based investment in strategic themes	13%	0.63	
		Financial transparency and benchmarking across partners	13%	1.00	
		Ring fence a ‘green transition’ capex/opex line	13%	0.89	
		Equity weighted budgeting for student support	13%	0.78	
	Ecological Performance	Integrate sustainable procurement standards into all purchasing processes	63%	1.33	
		Accessible sustainability learning and events	63%	2.00	
		Reduce greenhouse gas emissions across all campuses and mobility activities	50%	1.22	
		Reduce waste and promote circular resource use across facilities	50%	1.33	
		Strengthen biodiversity protection and green infrastructure on campuses	50%	1.33	
		Promote low emission travel policies for staff and students	25%	1.22	
		Circular waste management	25%	1.22	

		Nature positive campuses (net biodiversity gain)	25%	1.00	
		Sustainable ICT lifecycle	25%	1.22	
		Campus climate risk assessment and adaptation plan	25%	0.89	
		Increase the share of renewable energy used in university operations	13%	1.00	
		Implement environmentally responsible digital infrastructure practices	13%	1.00	
		Deep energy retrofits of buildings	13%	0.67	
		Green labs and research facilities	13%	0.78	
		Equitable access to green amenities	13%	1.44	
		Diverse representation in sustainability governance	13%	1.33	
		Affordable low carbon transport	13%	0.78	
		Energy cost relief in student housing	13%	0.33	
Social Perspective	**Student & Staff Performance**	Strengthen mental health, well being, and psychosocial support systems	88%	1.89	
		Increase participation in alliance wide mobility and joint programmes	75%	1.56	
		Develop staff and student competencies in sustainability, digital skills, and intercultural communication	63%	1.56	
		Improve access and inclusion for underrepresented student and staff groups	50%	1.67	
		Sustainability literacy for all graduates	50%	0.89	
		Improve staff career paths, recognition systems, and talent retention	25%	0.78	
		Expand opportunities for students and staff to take leadership roles in alliance initiatives	25%	1.78	
		Fair workload & flexible arrangements	25%	1.22	
		Crisis response training (staff & students)	25%	1.44	
		Enhance teaching quality and inclusive pedagogical methods across the alliance	13%	1.44	
		Improve progression, retention, completion	13%	1.33	
		Universal Design for Learning at scale	13%	1.22	
		Structured mentoring for underrepresented groups	13%	1.44	
		Alliance mental health model	13%	0.67	
		Digital resilience & cyber hygiene	13%	1.11	
	External Stakeholders & Partnerships	Strengthen strategic partnerships with municipalities, NGOs, schools, and industry	75%	1.89	
		Increase co creation projects with civil society and local communities	63%	1.67	
		Promote social innovation through community based research partnerships	63%	1.44	

		Expand placements & internships	50%	1.78	
		Accessible public programming (museums, lectures)	38%	1.78	
		School to university pipelines	38%	1.33	
		Expand the alliance's role in regional innovation ecosystems	25%	1.22	
		Increase co created education/research	25%	1.56	
		Improve visibility and accessibility of university resources to the public	13%	1.33	
		Strengthen alliances with European networks working on inclusion, sustainability, and resilience	13%	1.00	
		Foster long-term partnerships that contribute measurable social impact	13%	0.89	
		Activate alumni/donors for social missions	13%	0.67	
		SDG oriented living labs with cities/NGOs	13%	1.00	
		Green entrepreneurship with incubators	13%	1.00	
		Community co governance/advisory boards	13%	0.89	
		Joint cyber incident response drills	13%	0.67	
		Community resilience education	13%	0.89	
Operational Perspective	**Education & Research Performance**	Expand joint educational programmes, micro credentials, and flexible learning pathways	88%	1.33	
		Increase interdisciplinary and mission driven research addressing social and ecological challenges	75%	1.44	
		Improve student learning outcomes through evidence based and inclusive pedagogy	50%	1.56	
		Enhance digital learning environments and cross university platforms	50%	1.22	
		Increase integration of sustainability and inclusion in curricula	38%	1.44	
		Strengthen research collaborations that contribute concrete societal impact	38%	1.44	
		Strengthen open science practices, including data sharing and open access	25%	1.44	
		Embed SDGs & ESD outcomes across curricula	25%	1.00	
		Challenge based learning with external partners	25%	1.33	
		Advance open science practices	13%	1.33	
		Enhance supervision & doctoral success	13%	1.33	
		Accessible learning design	13%	1.00	
		Inclusive curriculum representation	13%	1.00	
		Scenario based learning (simulations/exercises)	13%	1.22	
		Language inclusive policies/communications	63%	1.56	
		Anti harassment & dignity systems	50%	1.67	

	Administration & Governance Performance	Enhance transparency and internal communication about alliance decisions	50%	1.56	
		Improve alliance governance to support shared decision making and accountability	38%	1.44	
		Reduce administrative burden for staff and students through process redesign	38%	0.67	
		Transparent, participatory governance	38%	1.44	
		Strengthen risk management, continuity planning, and adaptive governance	25%	0.78	
		Improve data quality and analytics capacity across institutions	25%	0.78	
		Green office standards (IAQ, energy)	25%	0.78	
		Co governance with staff/students	25%	1.44	
		Accessible admin & digital services	25%	1.33	
		Bias aware recruitment & promotion	25%	1.56	
		Harmonise key administrative processes to enable seamless mobility	13%	0.89	
		Increase efficiency and interoperability of digital administrative systems	13%	0.56	
		Ensure governance supports ecosystem partnerships and cross sector collaboration	13%	1.56	
		Sustainable procurement governance	13%	1.00	
		Paper lite, digital first admin	13%	1.44	
		Cybersecurity drills & hardening	13%	1.00	
Development & Impact	**Development, Innovation & Improvement**	Foster a culture of continuous improvement across teaching, research, and operations.	75%	1.56	
		Develop alliance-wide mechanisms for sharing best practices.	63%	1.44	
		Promote educational innovation, including digital pedagogy and experiential learning.	50%	1.56	
		Support staff development in future oriented competencies and lifelong learning.	50%	1.44	
		Expand innovation ecosystems involving students, staff, and external partners.	38%	1.11	
		Increase uptake of evidence based practices across programmes.	25%	1.33	
		Green campus testbeds (energy/waste/water)	25%	0.89	
		Mentoring & micro grants for underrepresented innovators	25%	0.56	
		Strengthen cross university experimentation labs, pilot projects, and testbeds.	13%	1.00	
		Future skills PD for staff	13%	1.56	
		Student innovation challenges	13%	1.44	
		SDG innovation labs (cross campus)	13%	1.00	

		Sustainable digital innovation (green IT)	13%	1.11	
		Sustainability PD mainstreamed	13%	1.22	
		Co design with students, staff & communities	13%	1.22	
		Inclusion outcomes tracked per programme	13%	0.67	
		Foresight & horizon scanning in planning	13%	1.00	
		Red team tests of critical processes	13%	0.33	
	Value of Societal Impact	Demonstrate measurable contributions to the UN SDGs and societal well being.	63%	0.89	
		Strengthen public engagement and science communication efforts.	63%	1.67	
		Promote civic engagement and democratic participation among students.	50%	1.78	
		Enhance the alliance's identity as a socially responsible European university.	50%	1.44	
		Increase the societal uptake of research and innovation outputs.	38%	0.67	
		Improve methods for assessing societal impact at institutional and alliance levels.	38%	0.78	
		Media literacy & misinformation resilience	38%	1.22	
		Support community resilience through targeted educational and research initiatives.	25%	1.11	
		Alumni/community outcome tracking	25%	0.78	
		Sustainable cities & communities initiatives	25%	1.33	
		Community based participatory research (CBPR)	25%	1.33	
		Public engagement & science communication	13%	1.33	
		Just transition partnerships	13%	1.22	
		Mass public sustainability education	13%	1.22	
		Cultural access & participation	13%	1.44	
		Cross border crisis collaboration mechanisms	13%	0.33	

Table 3: Top 5 List of objectives per performance areas

This table identifies the top five objectives under each performance area based on the average feasibility scores. It also indicates where an objective was given a red feasibility assessment by one or more of the partners, as this will be an important concern during the validation process for identifying alliance-wide objectives and indicators.

Perspective	Area	Objective	Average Feasibility Score	Alliance Feasibility Percentage	CAUTION: Contains at least 1 red ranking
Resource Perspective	Economic Performance	**Expand mission driven collaboration with industry, foundations, and civic partners**	1.89	94%	
		Increase participation and success rates in major EU funding programmes	1.44	72%	
		Increase efficiency of internal resource allocation through evidence based prioritisation	1.11	56%	x
		Enhance financial resilience through risk aware budgeting and reserves	1.00	50%	x
		Sustainable procurement standards across categories	1.00	50%	x
	Ecological Performance	**Accessible sustainability learning and events**	2.00	100%	
		Equitable access to green amenities	1.44	72%	x
		Integrate sustainable procurement standards into all purchasing processes	1.33	67%	x
		Reduce waste and promote circular resource use across facilities	1.33	67%	x
		Strengthen biodiversity protection and green infrastructure on campuses	1.33	67%	x
Social Perspective	Student & Staff Performance	**Strengthen mental health, well being, and psychosocial support systems**	1.89	94%	
		Expand opportunities for students and staff to take leadership roles in alliance initiatives	1.78	89%	
		Improve access and inclusion for underrepresented student and staff groups	1.67	83%	x
		Increase participation in alliance wide mobility and joint programmes	1.56	78%	
		Develop staff and student competencies in sustainability, digital skills, and intercultural communication	1.56	78%	
	External Stakeholders & Partnerships	**Strengthen strategic partnerships with municipalities, NGOs, schools, and industry**	1.89	94%	
		Expand placements & internships	1.78	89%	

		Accessible public programming (museums, lectures)	1.78	89%	
		Increase co creation projects with civil society and local communities	1.67	83%	
		Increase co created education/research	1.56	78%	
Operational Perspective	Education & Research Performance	**Improve student learning outcomes through evidence based and inclusive pedagogy**	1.56	78%	x
		Increase interdisciplinary and mission driven research addressing social and ecological challenges	1.44	72%	
		Increase integration of sustainability and inclusion in curricula	1.44	72%	
		Strengthen research collaborations that contribute concrete societal impact	1.44	72%	
		Strengthen open science practices, including data sharing and open access	1.44	72%	x
	Administration & Governance Performance	**Anti harassment & dignity systems**	1.67	83%	x
		Language inclusive policies/communications	1.56	78%	
		Enhance transparency and internal communication about alliance decisions	1.56	78%	
		Bias aware recruitment & promotion	1.56	78%	x
		Ensure governance supports ecosystem partnerships and cross sector collaboration	1.56	78%	
Development & Impact	Development, Innovation & Improvement	**Foster a culture of continuous improvement across teaching, research, and operations.**	1.56	78%	
		Promote educational innovation, including digital pedagogy and experiential learning.	1.56	78%	x
		Future skills PD for staff	1.56	78%	
		Develop alliance-wide mechanisms for sharing best practices.	1.44	72%	x
		Support staff development in future oriented competencies and lifelong learning.	1.44	72%	
	Value of Societal Impact	**Promote civic engagement and democratic participation among students.**	1.78	89%	
		Strengthen public engagement and science communication efforts.	1.67	83%	
		Enhance the alliance's identity as a socially responsible European university.	1.44	72%	
		Cultural access & participation	1.44	72%	
		Sustainable cities & communities initiatives	1.33	67%	

Table 4: Top List – No Red items

This table provides a list of objectives with the highest average feasibility scores, but it also excludes those objectives which were given a red assessment by one or more partners. Additional objectives without any red assessments which were not in the previous Top 5 list have been added here.

Perspective	Area	Objective	Average Feasibility Score	Alliance Feasibility Percentage
Resource Perspective	Economic Performance	**Expand mission driven collaboration with industry, foundations, and civic partners**	1.89	94%
		Increase participation and success rates in major EU funding programmes	1.44	72%
	Ecological Performance	**Accessible sustainability learning and events**	2.00	100%
Social Perspective	Student & Staff Performance	**Strengthen mental health, well being, and psychosocial support systems**	1.89	94%
		Expand opportunities for students and staff to take leadership roles in alliance initiatives	1.78	89%
		Increase participation in alliance wide mobility and joint programmes	1.56	78%
		Develop staff and student competencies in sustainability, digital skills, and intercultural communication	1.56	78%
		Crisis response training (staff & students)	1.44	72%
	External Stakeholders & Partnerships	**Strengthen strategic partnerships with municipalities, NGOs, schools, and industry**	1.89	94%
		Expand placements & internships	1.78	89%
		Accessible public programming (museums, lectures)	1.78	89%
		Increase co creation projects with civil society and local communities	1.67	83%
		Increase co created education/research	1.56	78%
Operational Perspective	Education & Research Performance	**Increase interdisciplinary and mission driven research addressing social and ecological challenges**	1.44	72%
		Increase integration of sustainability and inclusion in curricula	1.44	72%
		Strengthen research collaborations that contribute concrete societal impact	1.44	72%
	Administration & Governance Performance	**Language inclusive policies/communications**	1.56	78%
		Enhance transparency and internal communication about alliance decisions	1.56	78%

		Ensure governance supports ecosystem partnerships and cross sector collaboration	1.56	78%
		Improve alliance governance to support shared decision making and accountability	1.44	72%
		Transparent, participatory governance	1.44	72%
Development & Impact	Development, Innovation & Improvement	**Foster a culture of continuous improvement across teaching, research, and operations.**	1.56	78%
		Future skills PD for staff	1.56	78%
		Support staff development in future oriented competencies and lifelong learning.	1.44	72%
		Co design with students, staff & communities	1.22	61%
	Value of Societal Impact	**Promote civic engagement and democratic participation among students.**	1.78	89%
		Strengthen public engagement and science communication efforts.	1.67	83%
		Enhance the alliance's identity as a socially responsible European university.	1.44	72%
		Cultural access & participation	1.44	72%
		Sustainable cities & communities initiatives	1.33	67%

8.2 Indicators

Following the feasibility assessment and the identification of a smaller set of high-priority objectives per performance area, the next step will be to more systematically refine and operationalise the associated indicators. At this stage, the indicators included in the supporting document should be understood as provisional and illustrative, offering a shared starting point rather than a fixed specification. Once the shortlist of objectives is agreed, attention can shift towards validating which indicators are both meaningful and feasible across institutions. This process will likely involve refining definitions, clarifying data availability, and identifying where common indicator formats can be adopted without imposing unnecessary reporting burdens on partners.

In parallel, the development of the alliance-level dashboard can proceed iteratively. While a mock-up already exists, its final structure should remain flexible until there is agreement on the selected objectives and a clearer understanding of which indicators are most suitable for shared use. Rather than aiming for full standardisation, the dashboard can be designed around a layered approach, combining a limited set of broadly comparable indicators at alliance level with more context-specific indicators at institutional level. This allows the dashboard to function both as a tool for strategic overview and collective reflection, and as a gateway into more detailed, institution-specific analyses.

Finally, the application of indicators should be closely linked to the broader learning-oriented logic of the EMERGE BSC. Indicators are not intended to function solely as performance metrics, but as entry points for dialogue, interpretation, and shared learning. As institutions begin to work with selected objectives, indicators can be gradually embedded into existing data systems and strategic processes, allowing baselines to emerge organically over time. Through regular exchange across partners – comparing how indicators are interpreted, measured, and acted upon – the alliance can strengthen both alignment and mutual learning, while preserving the flexibility required for context-sensitive implementation.

9. Targets and Initiatives

Future work on defining baselines and targets within the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard should recognise the inherent diversity across partner institutions. Given differences in institutional size, resources, strategic priorities, and existing levels of maturity in areas such as sustainability, inclusion, and resilience, baselines must be established locally at each university. This allows targets to be defined in a way that is both realistic and ambitious within each specific context. Rather than prescribing uniform target levels, the framework should support institutions in defining their own trajectories of progress, thereby ensuring ownership and feasibility while avoiding artificial standardisation.

At the same time, alignment across the alliance can be fostered through the use of shared reference structures and comparative reflection. While targets remain locally defined, the use of commonly framed objectives and indicator categories enables institutions to situate their progress relative to others. This creates opportunities for structured exchange, benchmarking in a non-competitive sense, and identification of leading practices. In this way, baseline and target-setting processes become not only a technical exercise, but also a mechanism for collective sense-making and learning across the alliance.

The development of initiatives constitutes the most context-sensitive element of the framework and should therefore remain firmly within institutional autonomy. Universities should define initiatives as concrete actions, projects, or programmes that respond to their specific conditions and strategic priorities. However, across the alliance, these initiatives can be shared, discussed, and compared, allowing diverse approaches to similar challenges to be explored. This diversity becomes a key resource for alliance-level learning, enabling institutions to adapt and refine their strategies over time. In this sense, the EMERGE BSC supports a dynamic interplay between local experimentation and shared learning, strengthening both institutional development and collective alignment.

10. Dashboard

The EMERGE Balanced Scorecard dashboard has been developed as an **illustrative prototype** to support the conceptualisation and operationalisation of the framework. It is not intended as a finalised monitoring tool, but as a **simulation environment** demonstrating how objectives, indicators, targets, and initiatives can be organised and visualised across the alliance. Within the context of the European Universities Initiative, such tools are becoming increasingly important as alliances move towards more integrated models of strategic governance while preserving the autonomy and diversity of their member institutions. Shared strategic monitoring environments can support strategic coordination, evidence-informed decision-making and institutional learning across partner universities without relying on standardised comparison or benchmarking (Llorca et al., 2025; European University Association, 2023).

The EMERGE Balanced Scorecard dashboard is structured around the four core perspectives—Resource, Social, Operational, and Development & Impact—and incorporates a strategic map linking these perspectives to broader impact pathways. Within each perspective, example objectives are paired with indicative indicators, target structures, and associated initiatives, reflecting the underlying logic of the Balanced Scorecard.

In its current form, the dashboard already supports *exploratory and developmental use*. Interactive features allow users to navigate between different objectives and examine the relationships between indicators, targets, and initiatives. This facilitates structured engagement with the framework, enabling partners to assess the relevance and feasibility of proposed elements and to test the internal coherence of the model. The inclusion of an aggregated "home" view further illustrates how information could be synthesised for governance purposes, without implying that the underlying data is final or comparable at this stage.

As the feasibility assessment process leads to a more focused selection of objectives, the dashboard can be progressively refined and stabilised. Indicators associated with selected objectives can be validated, adjusted, and operationalised based on institutional input and data availability. The structure of the dashboard allows for a layered approach, combining a limited set of shared alliance-level indicators with institution-specific adaptations. This supports alignment across the alliance while maintaining the flexibility required for context-sensitive implementation at institutional level.

Beyond its technical function, the dashboard serves to make explicit the strategic logic of the EMERGE BSC. By linking objectives, indicators, and initiatives within each perspective—and situating these within a broader strategic map—it provides a structured representation of how priorities are operationalised. Using the dashboard helps translate abstract strategic ambitions into a more tangible and navigable structure, enabling users to trace how specific actions and initiatives relate to wider institutional and alliance-level goals.

Finally, the dashboard has been designed to support strategic learning across the alliance, rather than performance comparison or control. As institutions begin to populate indicators with real data and define context-specific baselines and targets, the dashboard can function as a platform for shared reflection and dialogue. Variations in implementation and progress can be used to inform collective reflection, identify transferable practices, and support ongoing adaptation. In this way, the dashboard reinforces the broader positioning of the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard as a **dynamic, learning-oriented framework**, in which visualisation supports alignment, reflection, and continuous development, rather than standardised comparison or ranking.

10.1 Dashboard Prototype Design

To complement the conceptual framework presented in this deliverable, a functional dashboard prototype was developed to demonstrate how the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard can be translated into an interactive strategic monitoring environment. The prototype provides an operational representation of the proposed framework, demonstrating how strategic objectives, indicators, initiatives and annual progress information can be organised within a coherent digital structure capable of supporting the future implementation of the framework across the Alliance.

The development of the prototype followed the principles commonly associated with Business Intelligence dashboards, which integrate information from different sources into a single visual environment to support performance monitoring and evidence-informed decision-making. Rather than presenting static reports, interactive dashboards enable users to explore information dynamically through filters, visualisations and different levels of detail, facilitating the interpretation of complex organisational information and supporting strategic management processes (Gonçalves et al., 2023).

To implement these design principles, Microsoft Power BI was selected as the development platform because it provides a flexible Business Intelligence environment capable of integrating structured datasets and creating interactive visualisations. The prototype has been developed around a central data model that integrates the information required across all dashboard modules. This architecture enables objectives, indicators, baseline values, targets and annual progress data to be managed within a single reporting environment, ensuring consistency across tables and visualisations throughout the dashboard. Within higher education, Power BI has been used to present institutional information, support planning processes and facilitate evidence-informed decision-making through interactive dashboards that enable users to explore information using filters, historical data and customised visualisations (López-Robledo, 2023).

The design of the prototype was guided by three main principles. First, the dashboard was designed to reproduce the hierarchical structure of the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard, maintaining the relationships between perspectives, performance areas, objectives, indicators and initiatives. Second, the navigation was designed to support

the progressive exploration of the framework, allowing users to move from an alliance-wide strategic overview to increasingly detailed operational information through interactive navigation and dynamic filtering. Finally, the prototype was conceived as a flexible environment capable of incorporating the future validation of objectives and indicators, together with institutional data and annual reporting information, as the Balanced Scorecard evolves through the implementation process.

These principles have been translated into a modular dashboard architecture organised around complementary levels of analysis. Together, these modules provide a strategic overview of the framework, detailed information on objectives and indicators, and a mechanism for monitoring annual progress within a single interactive environment. Consistent with the philosophy of the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard, the prototype has been conceived as a tool to support strategic monitoring, institutional learning and evidence-informed governance rather than standardised comparison or ranking (European University Association, 2023). As the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard evolves through the implementation process, the underlying data model can progressively incorporate validated objectives, indicators, baseline values, targets and annual progress information from each partner institution without requiring changes to the dashboard structure.

10.2 Dashboard Overview

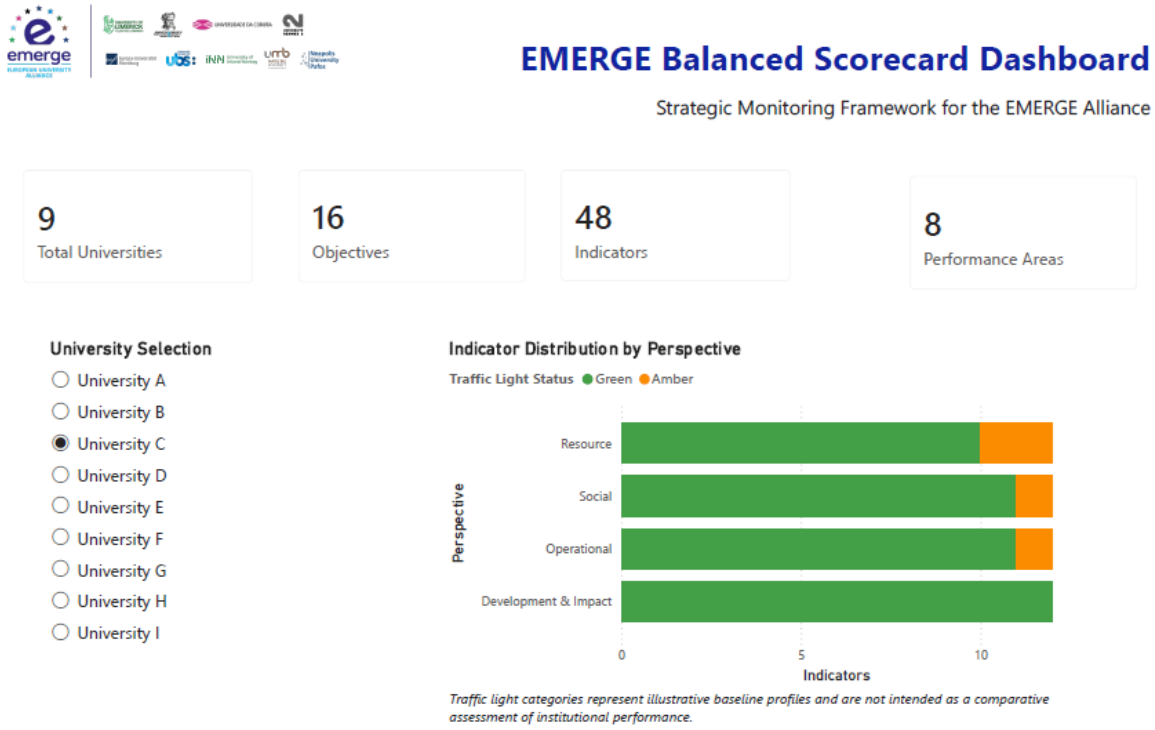
The Dashboard Overview constitutes the main entry point to the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard prototype and provides a high-level representation of the strategic framework. It has been designed to present the overall structure of the Balanced Scorecard before users access the more detailed modules devoted to strategic indicators and annual progress monitoring. As such, it offers an integrated overview of the framework and facilitates an initial understanding of how objectives, indicators and performance areas are organised across the Alliance.

The upper section of the dashboard presents a concise summary of the overall scope of the prototype, including the number of participating universities, strategic objectives, indicators and performance areas incorporated into the framework. Users can select an individual university, enabling the dashboard to display institution-specific information while maintaining a consistent reporting structure across the Alliance. In addition, the indicator distribution chart provides an overview of how indicators are allocated across the four strategic perspectives, offering an immediate visual representation of the overall structure of the Balanced Scorecard.

The lower section presents the hierarchical organisation of the framework, linking strategic perspectives, performance areas, objectives, associated SIR values (i.e., sustainability, inclusion, and resilience), baseline values and target values within a single view. This hierarchical representation illustrates how the different components of the Balanced Scorecard are connected and provides users with a structured overview of the strategic architecture before exploring the detailed information available in the subsequent dashboard modules.

Together, these elements establish the context for the remaining sections of the dashboard and provide users with a coherent entry point for navigating the prototype. The Dashboard Overview has therefore been designed to support strategic orientation and facilitate the interpretation of the overall framework, rather than to assess institutional performance.

Figure 1: Dashboard Overview page of the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard prototype



Balanced Scorecard Structure

Strategic Structure	SIR Values	Baseline	Target
Resource			
Economic Performance			
Scale shared services and joint procurement	Sustainability	320024	980057
Strengthen long-term financial sustainability through diversified funding models	Sustainability	13610	19606
Ecological Performance			
Increase the share of renewable energy used in university operations	Sustainability	5138	13885
Integrate sustainable procurement standards into all purchasing processes	Sustainability	108	262
Social			
Student & Staff Performance			
Improve access and inclusion for underrepresented student and staff groups	Inclusion	150	230
Strengthen mental health, well-being, and psychosocial support systems	Resilience	124	170
External Stakeholders & Partnerships			
SDG-oriented living labs with cities and NGOs	Sustainability, Inclusion	35	92
Strengthen strategic partnerships with municipalities, NGOs, schools, and industry	Sustainability, Inclusion, Resilience	95	145
Operational			
Education & Research Performance			
Increase participation in joint degrees, microcredentials, and flexible learning pathways	Inclusion, Sustainability	1122	2986
Strengthen research excellence and cross-alliance collaboration	Sustainability, Resilience	236	560
Administration & Governance Performance			
Improve alliance governance to support shared decision making and accountability	Inclusion, Resilience	146	256
Increase efficiency and interoperability of digital administrative systems	Resilience, Inclusion	122	257
Development & Impact			
Development, Innovation & Improvement			
Increase innovation capacity and experimentation in education, research, and governance	Sustainability, Resilience	37	113
Strengthen evidence-informed strategic planning and foresight capacity	Resilience, Sustainability	44	110
Value of Societal Impact			
Expand citizen engagement and co-creation in societal challenge initiatives	Inclusion, Sustainability	284	826
Increase policy engagement and evidence-informed contributions to public decision-making	Inclusion, Sustainability	88	170

10.3 Strategic Details

The Strategic Details page constitutes the core analytical module of the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard prototype. It provides detailed information on the objectives, indicators and initiatives associated with each strategic perspective, allowing users to explore the operational components of the Balanced Scorecard in a structured and coherent manner. While the Dashboard Overview presents the overall architecture of the framework, this module enables users to examine the individual elements that support strategic monitoring and implementation.

The page is organised around a hierarchical structure that groups indicators according to the strategic perspectives and their corresponding performance areas. For each objective, the dashboard displays the associated performance indicator, the initiative proposed to support its achievement, and the corresponding baseline and target values. This organisation enables users to understand the relationships between strategic objectives, performance indicators, associated initiatives and expected outcomes within a single integrated view.

The university selection filter allows users to display the information associated with a specific institution while maintaining a common reporting structure across the Alliance. Although the values currently displayed are illustrative, the dashboard has been designed to accommodate institution-specific baseline values, targets and initiatives as these become available through the implementation of the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard.

By bringing together strategic objectives, indicators and initiatives within the same environment, this module provides the operational level of the Balanced Scorecard and illustrates how strategic priorities are translated into measurable indicators supported by institutional initiatives. It therefore serves as the principal reference for understanding the internal logic of the framework and for supporting the future implementation of institution-specific monitoring processes.

Figure 2: Strategic Details page of the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard prototype

University Selection

University A	**University B**	University C
University D	University E	University F
University G	University H	University I

Strategic Indicators and Initiatives

Indicator Hierarchy	Initiative	Baseline	Target
Economic Performance			
Cost avoidance or savings (€)	Joint tendering for common goods and services	180000	750000
External income per academic FTE	Joint fundraising or philanthropy initiatives aligned with alliance priorities	9500	16500
Revenue concentration ratio (top income sources)	Capacity-building for grant acquisition and donor engagement	72	50
Share of institutional income by funding source (%)	Alliance-level strategy for diversified funding portfolios	38	58
Volume of procurement spend through joint frameworks	Alliance procurement frameworks	14	40
Number of institutions participating	Shared supplier agreements	2	7
Ecological Performance			
On-site renewable generation (MWh)	Campus solar, wind, or geothermal installations	3100	10500
Supplier compliance with sustainability standards	Sustainability screening of suppliers	36	82
Share of energy from renewable sources (%)	Green power purchase agreements	35	72
% of procurement processes including sustainability criteria	Alliance-wide sustainable procurement standards	22	70
Procurement staff trained in sustainable procurement	Procurement capacity-building initiatives	18	85
Long-term renewable contracts in place	Partnerships with local energy providers	2	7
Education & Research Performance			
Enrolment in joint degrees and microcredentials	Joint programme development	720	2200
Joint publications and citations	Research collaboration networks	125	330
Learner satisfaction with flexibility and accessibility	Flexible and hybrid learning models	67	90
Completion rates of flexible learning pathways	Recognition frameworks for microcredentials	58	85
Participation in international research initiatives	Shared research support services	25	62
Number of joint research projects	Cross-alliance research funding schemes	21	58
Value of Societal Impact			
Participation in citizen engagement activities	Citizen engagement programmes	150	520
Stakeholder perceptions of participation quality	Community-based challenge initiatives	55	88
Policymaker satisfaction with contributions	Policy dialogue events	50	86
Diversity of participants in co-creation activities	Co-creation and participatory design methods	32	72
Use of alliance evidence in policy processes	Evidence-to-policy initiatives	12	38
Participation in policy advisory activities	Policy engagement platforms	8	26
Student & Staff Performance			
Beneficiary satisfaction levels	Equity-focused participation strategies	57	86
Wellbeing survey results	Training for staff and student support roles	55	80
Accessibility compliance rates	Accessibility and inclusion support services	48	88
Waiting time for support services	Counselling and wellbeing service expansion	32	12
Utilisation of wellbeing services	Preventive wellbeing programmes	29	68
Participation rates from underrepresented groups	Inclusive outreach initiatives	21	42
Administration & Governance Performance			
Clarity of governance roles	Clear governance charters	53	90
User satisfaction with systems	Shared digital platforms	49	85
Timeliness of decisions	Regular governance reviews	42	78
Participation in decision-making processes	Defined decision rights	36	78
System interoperability indicators	Integration of core IT systems	34	82
Reduction in duplicate data entry	Digital architecture roadmaps	12	65
External Stakeholders & Partnerships			
Partner satisfaction assessments	Dedicated partnership coordination roles	66	91
Number of strategic partnership agreements	Formal partnership frameworks	18	38
Participation of cities and NGOs	City–university–NGO co-creation platforms	16	42
Documented societal or sustainability outcomes	Shared methods for monitoring living lab impacts	5	18
Duration and continuity of partnerships	Joint steering groups with external partners	4	9
Number of SDG-oriented living lab initiatives	Alliance frameworks for SDG-oriented living labs	3	14
Development, Innovation & Improvement			
Participation in strategic planning processes	Foresight-informed governance practices	24	70
Participation in innovation initiatives	Cross-functional innovation teams	20	62
Number of innovation pilots and experiments	Innovation funding and experimentation schemes	7	26
Use of foresight and evidence in planning	Strategic foresight exercises	5	16
Availability of strategic intelligence tools	Shared evidence and analytics systems	3	11
Successful scaling of innovation pilots	Innovation support and incubation structures	3	13

10.4 Annual Progress Tracking

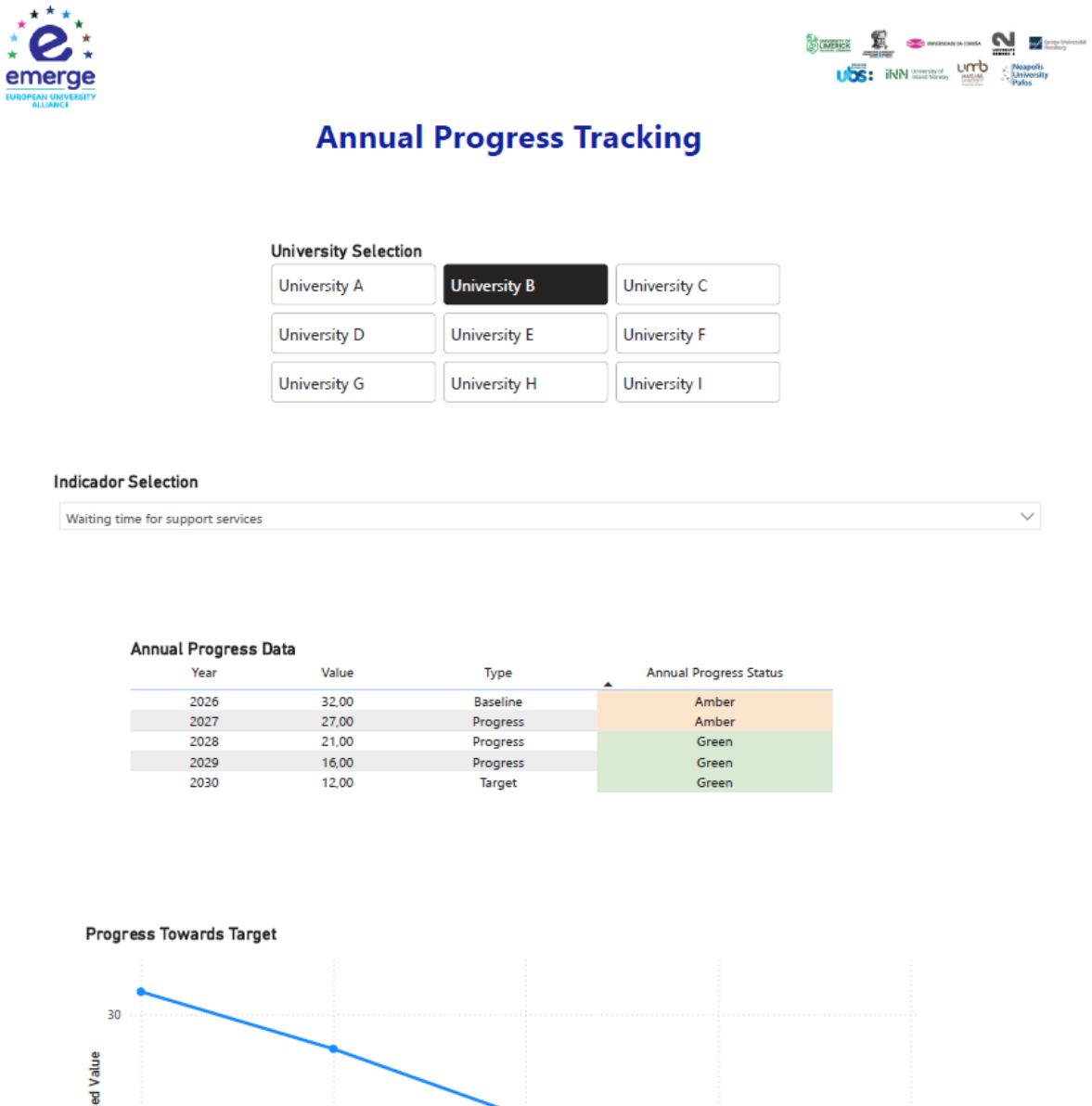
The Annual Progress Tracking page represents the monitoring component of the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard prototype. It enables users to follow the evolution of individual indicators over time by displaying annual reported values in relation to their corresponding baseline and target values. In doing so, it complements the strategic and operational information presented in the previous modules by introducing a temporal dimension to the Balanced Scorecard.

Users can select both an individual university and a specific indicator, allowing the dashboard to display the corresponding annual monitoring information. Once these selections have been made, the Annual Progress Data table and the accompanying line chart update automatically to present the reported values, baseline, target and the corresponding Annual Progress Status associated with the selected indicator. This interactive functionality provides a clear representation of progress while maintaining a consistent reporting structure across all partner institutions.

By combining interactive filtering with the automatic updating of tabular and graphical information, the dashboard facilitates the interpretation of progress towards agreed targets and supports the analysis of indicator evolution over time. Once validated institutional data become available, it will provide a consistent mechanism for reviewing annual progress across the Alliance.

Together, these three dashboard modules demonstrate how the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard can be operationalised within a coherent digital environment that integrates strategic orientation, operational management and annual progress monitoring across the Alliance.

Figure 3: Annual Progress Tracking page of the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard prototype



Section 3: Next Steps – Adoption and Implementation of the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard across the alliance

The previous section presents the developed EMERGE Balanced Scorecard Framework. This framework has now reached a **structured and integrative stage of development**, bringing together a comprehensive set of potential objectives, associated indicators, and illustrative initiatives across the four core perspectives. It represents a **coherent strategic architecture** that translates the alliance's core values into an operationally meaningful framework, supported by clearly articulated linkages between objectives, measurement approaches, and implementation pathways. While further refinement is ongoing, the framework already provides a **robust and actionable foundation** for guiding alignment, informing strategic discussion, and supporting progressive implementation across the alliance.

Next steps will focus on **validating a core set of shared objectives and associated indicators at alliance level**, through formal decision-making processes, while also enabling each partner to identify and integrate **additional context-relevant objectives** aligned with their institutional strategies. In parallel, the framework will support a **flexible and phased implementation approach**, combining common areas of alignment with institution-specific baselines, targets, and initiatives, thereby ensuring both coherence across the alliance and responsiveness to local contexts.

11. Status of EMERGE Balanced Scorecard Framework

The EMERGE BSC framework integrates strategic priorities, measurable indicators, and context-specific actions within a shared structure that supports alignment, implementation, and continuous learning across the alliance.

The EMERGE BSC provides a robust framework to translate strategic priorities into practical actions. This enables to incorporation of the EMERGE values of sustainability, inclusion and resilience holistically into the operational areas of EMERGE universities, while also providing a common strategic direction across the alliance. As a learning-oriented framework, the EMERGE BSC presents a forward-looking and indicative structure with the intention to not only operationalise current institutional development but additionally aiming to provide a roadmap towards the full mainstreaming of sustainability, inclusion and resilience as key value propositions for the societal impact of the EMERGE alliance and its partners.

The framework is structured around the following **core components**:

Four Perspectives and Eight Performance Areas

Resource Perspective	Social Perspective	Operational Perspective	Development & Impact Perspective
Economic Performance	Student & Staff Performance	Education & Research Performance	Development, Innovation & Improvement
Ecological Performance	External Stakeholders & Partnerships	Administration & Governance Performance	Value of Societal Impact

Strategic Objectives

- Feasibility-assessed set of potential and emerging objectives.
- Includes opportunity to agree both:
  - **Alliance-level (shared) objectives,**
  - **Institution-specific (context-relevant) objectives.**
- Further structuring into core strategic objectives and enabling or operational sub-objectives.

Indicators (Measures)

- 2–3 **illustrative indicators per objective**.
- Designed to support both monitoring of progress and strategic interpretation and learning.
- Include:
  - Conceptual definition (what is being measured),
  - Operationalisation (data source / method).

Baselines and Targets

- **Baseline**: Current level of performance at each institution.
- **Target**: Desired level of progress over time.
- To be defined:
  - Individually by institutions,
  - Relative to their specific starting points and contexts.

Initiatives (Actions)

- Context-specific **projects, actions, or programmes** planned and implemented by individual EMERGE universities.
- Designed to:
  - Support achievement of objectives,
  - Drive change reflected in indicators.

Strategic Map

- A **conceptual model** linking:
  - Perspectives,
  - Objectives,
  - Impact pathways.
- Shows how activities contribute to broader:
  - institutional transformation,
  - societal impact.

Monitoring and Dashboard Environment

- Dashboard prototype linking:
  - Objectives → indicators → targets → initiatives.
- Provides:
  - visualisation of relationships,
  - overview of progress (illustrative at this stage).
- Functions as:
  - a strategic navigation tool,
  - a shared reference across partners.

Implementation Logic

- Recognition of **different institutional starting points.**
- Use of **progressive implementation pathways**:
  - Emerging → Intermediate → Advanced.
- Supports:
  - flexibility,
  - phased adoption.

Learning and Governance Dimension

- Framework designed as a learning-oriented system-
- Supports:
  - reflection and interpretation (not just measurement),
  - dialogue across partners,
  - iterative refinement over time.

12. The EMERGE Balanced Scorecard within the framing of the European Universities Initiative

Across the European Universities Initiative, increasing attention has been devoted to the development of shared governance and monitoring mechanisms capable of supporting the implementation of long-term alliance strategies. Rather than adopting formal Balanced Scorecard approaches, alliances have generally developed monitoring frameworks, indicator systems and governance structures tailored to their collaborative context. The European Commission has recognised this evolution by proposing a common monitoring framework that combines qualitative and quantitative evidence, supports longitudinal assessment, and respects the institutional diversity of alliances while facilitating evidence-informed strategic development (European Commission, 2025). Similarly, the European University Association has advocated holistic approaches to monitoring that integrate multiple dimensions of alliance development while avoiding simplistic benchmarking between alliances (European University Association, 2023).

Individual alliances illustrate different approaches to this shared challenge. **EUTOPIA** has established a *Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism* supported by a Central Monitor and the progressive development of indicators and targets to assess the evolution of its Connected Communities and strategic activities (Triquet, 2025; Szávics, 2026). **CHARM-EU** has focused on *developing governance and management mechanisms* that promote continuous organisational learning and institutional adaptation throughout the alliance's implementation process (Pons Rafols, 2022). More broadly, the Commission's report indicates that a growing number of alliances have developed joint quality assurance strategies, indicator-based monitoring processes and common evaluation frameworks to support alliance development and continuous improvement (European Commission, 2025). The report also identifies **EuroTeQ** as an example of good practice in institutional research and data management, highlighting its use of a *Power BI–based indicator dashboard* to visualise key alliance indicators relating to studies and innovation, mobility, co-creation and outreach, thereby facilitating evidence-informed decision-making (European Commission, 2025).

Taken together, these initiatives demonstrate a growing commitment to strategic monitoring, institutional learning and evidence-informed governance across European University Alliances. However, the reviewed documentation describes these approaches primarily as monitoring, governance or quality assurance frameworks rather than as integrated objective-based management systems that explicitly combine strategic objectives, indicators, initiatives and prioritisation processes within a single Balanced Scorecard architecture (European Commission, 2025; European University Association, 2023).

In contrast, the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard represents a distinct conceptual and practical contribution. Rather than functioning primarily as a reporting instrument, it translates alliance strategy into a coherent strategic management framework that explicitly links objectives, indicators, initiatives and annual monitoring across multiple organisational perspectives. Furthermore, the methodology incorporates objective-level feasibility assessment through traffic-light ratings, cross-partner aggregation and the "No-Red" prioritisation process, thereby supporting transparent strategic decision-making while respecting institutional diversity. In this way, the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard functions not simply as a monitoring system but as a framework for strategic alignment, institutional learning and evidence-informed governance across the Alliance.

13. Validation of Framework by the Steering Committee

As outlined in the grant agreement, the development of the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard framework will be followed by a **formal validation phase with the Steering Committee** between June and December 2026. This phase represents a critical transition from conceptual design to governance-level endorsement and adoption.

During the validation process, the Steering Committee will review, discuss, and formally endorse a *core set of shared strategic objectives and associated indicators* for use across the alliance. This process will be informed by the results of both the *prioritisation exercise* and the *feasibility assessment*, ensuring that selected elements reflect both strategic relevance and practical implementability across institutional contexts.

The validation process is expected to result in:

- a **defined set of alliance-level priority objectives**,
- a **limited and manageable set of shared indicators**,
- agreement on the **principles for institutional adaptation and extension** of the framework.

Importantly, validation does not imply full standardisation. Rather, it establishes a *common strategic reference framework*, within which institutions retain the flexibility to:

- define context-specific baselines and targets,
- introduce additional objectives and indicators aligned with institutional priorities,
- adapt implementation pathways based on local capacities and maturity levels.

Table 5: Timeline for Validation Process

Timing	Progression
May-June 2026	Steering Committee reviews initial draft of Balanced Scorecard framework and proposal for PowerBI dashboard.
July-August 2026	The final deliverable of the Balanced Scorecard report is circulated and reviewed by Alliance Management Team and Steering Committee.
September 2026	The lead and co-lead of the Balanced Scorecard work presents information on the validation process to the Steering Committee, and the Steering Committee agrees on a short-list of objectives and indicators to be reviewed and considered for common adoption by each university in the EMERGE Alliance individually.
October 2026	Each university in the EMERGE Alliance individually reviews the short-list of objectives and indicators and provides their formal response back to the Steering Committee. The lead and co-lead of the Balanced Scorecard work conduct a review on the use of PowerBI environment across Alliance partners to determine if this is the most appropriate software for the EMERGE BSC dashboard.
November 2026	The lead and co-lead of the Balanced Scorecard work compiles the formal responses provided individual university and presents these results to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee deliberates and adopts a selected group pf objectives and indicators to be applied commonly at the Alliance-level.
December 2026	The lead and co-lead of the Balanced Scorecard work finalise the common-level of the EMERGE BSC dashboard, and they prepare instructions for the implementation of the Balanced Scorecard across the Alliance. In addition, instructions on how individual universities can further adapt and contextualise their own Balanced Scorecard both through identifying their own baselines, targets and initiatives and through selection of additional objectives and indicators are developed.
December 2026-February 2027	The members of the working group for the Balanced Scorecard provide training to individual universities within the Alliance on: 1) further refining their individual Balanced Scorecard, 2) establishing baselines, targets and initiatives, 3) selecting additional objectives and indicators particularly relevant at a university level, and 4) monitoring and collecting data on their indicators.

14. Contextualised Adoption and Implementation by EMERGE Universities

The BSC framework also offers a flexible pathway for adapting the overall value of this strategic alignment process to the specific needs and context of each EMERGE university. While a core set of shared objectives and indicators will be validated at alliance level, the framework is explicitly designed to support **context-sensitive interpretation and implementation**, recognising the diversity of institutional profiles, capacities, and strategic priorities across the alliance.

At institutional level, adoption of the framework is therefore expected to involve a process of translation rather than replication. Universities are encouraged to interpret shared objectives in relation to their own strategic context and to define **institution-specific baselines, targets, and initiatives** that reflect local starting points and development trajectories. In addition, institutions may identify and integrate additional objectives and indicators that address priorities not fully captured within the alliance-level framework, thereby extending and enriching its relevance.

Implementation is further supported by a progressive and differentiated approach, reflecting varying levels of maturity across institutions. The framework accommodates different implementation pathways, allowing universities to engage with selected objectives at different stages—ranging from initial exploration to more structured and integrated application. This ensures that participation in the BSC remains proportionate and achievable, while still contributing to overall alignment across the alliance.

Importantly, contextualised adoption does not weaken alignment, but rather strengthens it by enabling meaningful engagement with the framework. By allowing institutions to adapt, prioritise, and operationalise objectives in ways that reflect their specific contexts, the framework supports genuine ownership and avoids superficial or compliance-driven implementation. This, in turn, increases the likelihood of sustained integration into institutional strategies and practices.

Finally, the combination of shared and context-specific elements provides a foundation for strategic learning across the alliance. As institutions implement and adapt the framework in different ways, the resulting diversity of approaches can be used to support *comparison, reflection, and exchange of practices*. The dashboard and related processes can facilitate the sharing of insights, challenges, and innovations, enabling the alliance to evolve the framework over time based on collective experience. In this sense, contextualised implementation is not only a practical necessity, but a core mechanism through which the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard generates value as a *dynamic, learning-oriented governance framework.*

15. Facilitating the Implementation of the EMERGE BSC

Throughout the next phase, the working group will play a central role in coordinating and supporting the adoption and implementation of the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard across the alliance. This will include further clarification of **adoption protocols, governance processes, implementation pathways, and data collection approaches**, ensuring a transparent and consistent basis for both Steering Committee validation and institutional engagement.

Support will be provided through a combination of guidance materials, structured workshops, and ongoing peer exchange, enabling institutions to translate the framework into their local contexts while maintaining alignment with alliance-level priorities. Particular attention will be given to defining minimum expectations for participation, alongside clear principles for contextual adaptation, ensuring a balanced approach between coherence and flexibility.

In parallel, the working group will further develop the dashboard prototype into a functional strategic tool, enhancing its capacity to support not only visualisation and monitoring, but also reflection, interpretation, and shared learning across institutions. This includes integrating features that make learning processes more explicit and support the exchange of practices and experiences.

Implementation will be approached as an iterative and learning-oriented process, with ongoing refinement of objectives, indicators, and approaches based on institutional feedback and emerging practice. Over time, the BSC is expected to become progressively embedded within institutional and alliance-level processes, supporting *continuous alignment, strategic dialogue, and adaptive development* across the EMERGE universities.

16. Guidance for Partners: Using the EMERGE BSC Dashboard

The following guidance provides an overview of how partners should use the EMERGE BSC dashboard to support reflection, alignment, and learning within and across institutions as the framework continues to develop.

Table 6: Guidance for Partners on using the EMERGE BSC dashboard

Purpose of Use	• Use the dashboard as a **strategic reflection and alignment tool** • Focus on understanding **relationships between objectives, indicators, and initiatives** • Avoid using it as a **performance reporting or control instrument**
At the Current Stage (Prototype Phase)	• Review and reflect on **proposed objectives and indicators** • Assess **feasibility, relevance, and clarity** within your institutional context • Identify where **existing data and practices** can support implementation

During Further Development	• Contribute to the **refinement of shared objectives and indicator structures**
	• Define **institution-specific baselines, targets, and initiatives**
	• Ensure alignment between:
	  ○ strategic priorities
	  ○ operational actions

For Alliance-Level Collaboration	• Use the dashboard to support **structured dialogue and peer learning**
	• Share:
	  ○ implementation approaches
	  ○ challenges and adaptations
	  ○ emerging practices
	• Identify **transferable solutions and opportunities for joint action**

Longer-Term Use	• Support **continuous strategic learning and adaptation**
	• Use the dashboard to:
	  ○ monitor progress
	  ○ reflect on assumptions
	  ○ adjust priorities over time
	• Maintain **alignment across the alliance** while preserving institutional **autonomy and contextual flexibility**

EMERGE Balanced Scorecard – At a Glance

What is the EMERGE Balanced Scorecard?

The EMERGE Balanced Scorecard (BSC) is a **shared strategic framework** designed to support alignment, dialogue, and institutional development across the EMERGE alliance. It adapts the traditional Balanced Scorecard into a **learning-oriented system**, shifting its focus from performance control to *strategic translation, collective reflection, and coordinated action.*

Rather than functioning as a reporting tool, the EMERGE BSC acts as a common language for aligning strategy, enabling universities to integrate the core values of sustainability, inclusion, and resilience into their core activities across education, research, governance, and societal engagement.

What does this deliverable aim to achieve?

The EMERGE BSC provides a structured yet flexible strategic architecture that:

- Translates shared alliance values into **concrete objectives, indicators, and initiatives;**
- Supports **alignment across diverse institutional strategies**;
- Enables **evidence-informed dialogue and decision-making;**
- Facilitates **collective learning and continuous development.**

It is designed not to add reporting burdens, but to serve as a **forward-looking framework** that supports the long-term transformation of the alliance toward integrated, value-driven institutional development.

Which elements are common across the alliance?

The framework establishes a **shared strategic backbone** that provides coherence across all EMERGE universities:

- **Four perspectives**:
  - Resource,
  - Social,
  - Operational,
  - Development & Impact.
- **Eight performance areas**, covering key domains of university activity.
- A **common pool of strategic objectives**, developed and validated through:
  - Prioritisation,
  - Feasibility assessment.
- A **shared indicator framework (high level)** to support:
  - Reflection,
  - Comparability,
  - Dialogue.
- A **common dashboard environment**:
  - visualising relationships between objectives, indicators, and initiatives;
  - supporting alliance-level learning and exchange:

These elements ensure *strategic alignment and a shared direction* across the alliance while maintaining flexibility in implementation.

Which elements remain institution-specific?

The EMERGE BSC is designed around the principle of *"alignment with flexibility",* meaning that implementation is adapted to each university's context.

At institutional level, partners:

- Select **relevant objectives** from the shared framework;
- Define **local baselines and targets** based on their starting point;
- Develop **context-specific initiatives and actions;**
- May include **additional objectives** reflecting institutional priorities;
- Apply indicators in ways that reflect **local data systems and capacities.**

This approach ensures:

- Institutional ownership,
- Contextual relevance,
- Avoidance of compliance-driven or standardised implementation.

Diversity of implementation is treated as a resource for learning and innovation across the alliance.

How are partners expected to use the dashboard?

The dashboard is not a performance ranking tool, but a strategic support and learning environment.

Partners are expected to use it to:

Support strategic reflection

- Explore relationships between objectives, indicators, and initiatives;
- Interpret progress in relation to institutional and alliance goals.

Enable alignment and planning

- Link strategic priorities to operational actions;
- Identify areas for development and investment.

Facilitate dialogue and peer learning

- Share experiences, challenges, and practices across institutions;
- Identify transferable solutions and opportunities for collaboration.

Support continuous learning and adaptation

- Reflect on assumptions behind strategies;
- Adjust priorities over time based on evidence and experience.

Importantly, the dashboard:

- does not enforce standardisation;
- does not compare or rank institutions;
- functions as a space for interpretation, exchange, and collective sense-making.

Key takeaway

The EMERGE Balanced Scorecard is not just a framework for measuring performance — it is a *strategic learning system* that enables the alliance to:

- Align around shared values and priorities,
- Translate strategy into action,
- Learn across institutional diversity,
- Continuously adapt to complex and evolving challenges.

FROM CONTROL → COORDINATION

FROM REPORTING → LEARNING

FROM STANDARDISATION → ALIGNED FLEXIBILITY

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ANNEXES

Annex 1: Potential Synthesis of Main Strategic Objectives per each performance area (with enabling objectives and instruments grouped as sub-objectives)

Resource Perspective - Economic Performance

- **Ensure long-term financial sustainability through diversified and mission-aligned income**
  - Increase participation and success in EU funding programmes
  - Expand mission-driven collaboration with industry, foundations, and civic partners
  - Joint fundraising and philanthropy initiatives
- **Optimise use of shared resources and economies of scale across the alliance**
  - Develop and scale shared services
  - Joint procurement frameworks
  - Evidence-based internal resource prioritisation
- **Strengthen financial resilience and risk preparedness at alliance and institutional levels**
  - Risk-aware, multi-year budgeting
  - Financial stress testing and scenario analysis
  - Reserve and contingency policies
- **Align investment decisions with strategic priorities and sustainability transitions**
  - Portfolio-based investment in strategic themes
  - Ring-fenced green transition capex/opex (i.e., capital expenditure/operating expenditure or sustainability measures)
  - Strategic investment monitoring
- **Leverage procurement and mobility spending to advance sustainability and inclusion**
  - Sustainable procurement standards
  - Social value and inclusive procurement clauses; Low-carbon travel budgeting
  - Inclusive mobility top-ups and hardship funds

Resource Perspective - Ecological Performance

- **Deliver a sustained climate and energy transition across campuses and mobility**
  - Greenhouse gas reduction

  - Renewable energy uptake
  - Deep energy retrofits
  - Low-emission travel policies
- **Increase resource efficiency and circularity across operations and ICT**
  - Sustainable procurement
  - Waste reduction and circular use
  - Green labs
  - Sustainable ICT lifecycle
- **Achieve nature-positive, biodiversity-enhancing campuses**
  - Biodiversity protection and green infrastructure
  - Habitat restoration
  - Nature-positive campus strategies
- **Strengthen climate adaptation and resilience of campuses and operations**
  - Campus climate risk assessments
  - Adaptation planning
  - Infrastructure resilience measures
- **Embed inclusive sustainability governance and engagement across the alliance**
  - Diverse representation in sustainability governance
  - Accessible sustainability learning and events
  - Affordable low-carbon transport

Social Perspective - Student & Staff Performance

- **Ensure inclusive access, participation, and success for students and staff**
  - Widening participation
  - Progression, retention, completion
  - Structured mentoring
  - Universal Design for Learning
- **Strengthen wellbeing, mental health, and psychosocial resilience**
  - Mental health services
  - Alliance mental health model
  - Fair workload and flexible arrangements
  - Crisis response training
- **Enhance quality, inclusivity, and effectiveness of teaching and learning experiences**
  - Inclusive pedagogy
  - Teaching enhancement programmes
  - Accessible learning design
  - Inclusive curriculum representation
- **Develop future-ready competencies for sustainability, digitalisation, and intercultural engagement**
  - Sustainability literacy for all graduates

  - Digital skills development
  - Intercultural competence initiatives
- **Foster leadership, engagement, and career development across the alliance**
  - Leadership opportunities
  - Staff career paths and recognition
  - Talent retention initiatives

Social Perspective - External Stakeholders & Partnerships

- **Build strategic, long-term partnerships that deliver measurable societal impact**
  - Partnerships with municipalities, NGOs, schools, industry
  - Impact-oriented partnership frameworks
- **Strengthen co-creation and social innovation with communities and civil society**
  - Community-based research
  - Co-created education and research
  - Living labs
  - Social innovation projects
- **Position the alliance as a key actor in regional and European innovation ecosystems**
  - Regional innovation platforms
  - European network alliances
  - Cross-sector collaboration support
- **Expand inclusive pathways between education, work, and society**
  - Placements and internships
  - School-to-university pipelines
  - Alumni and donor engagement for social missions
- **Enhance public engagement, trust, and societal connection**
  - Accessible public programming
  - Visibility of university resources
  - Community advisory boards
  - Community resilience education

Operational Perspective - Education & Research Performance

- **Deliver inclusive, high-quality, and future-oriented learning across the alliance**
  - Joint programmes and micro-credentials
  - Inclusive pedagogy
  - Accessible learning design
  - Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

- **Advance interdisciplinary, mission-driven research addressing societal challenges**
  - Mission-oriented research calls
  - Interdisciplinary research centres
  - SDG-aligned research
- **Strengthen openness, integrity, and reuse of knowledge**
  - Open science practices
  - Open access and data sharing
  - Open educational resources
- **Enhance digital learning environments and cross-university platforms**
  - Shared LMS
  - Interoperable digital platforms
  - Digital infrastructure investments
- **Improve doctoral training, supervision, and research career quality**
  - Supervisor training
  - Doctoral success frameworks
  - Monitoring progression and wellbeing

Operational Perspective - Administration & Governance Performance

- **Ensure inclusive, transparent, and accountable alliance governance**
  - Participatory governance
  - Co-governance with staff and students
  - Transparent decision communication
- **Deliver efficient, user-centred, and digitally enabled administration**
  - Process harmonisation
  - Interoperable digital systems
  - Paper-lite administration
  - Burden reduction
- **Strengthen data, analytics, and evidence-informed decision making**
  - Data governance frameworks
  - Shared dashboards
  - Analytics capacity building
- **Build organisational resilience through risk, continuity, and cybersecurity governance**
  - Risk management
  - Business continuity planning
  - Cybersecurity drills and hardening
- **Embed equality, accessibility, and sustainability standards in administration**
  - Bias-aware recruitment
  - Language-inclusive communication

- Accessible services
- Sustainable procurement governance
- Green office standards

Development & Impact Perspective - Development, Innovation & Improvement

- **Foster a culture of continuous improvement and organisational learning**
  - Evidence-based practices
  - Best-practice sharing
  - Inclusion outcome tracking
  - Improvement cycles
- **Strengthen innovation capacity and experimentation across the alliance**
  - Educational innovation
  - Student innovation challenges
  - Green campus testbeds
  - Sustainable digital innovation
- **Support future-oriented staff development and lifelong learning**
  - Future-skills Professional Development
  - Sustainability Professional Development
  - Micro-credentials for staff
- **Enable inclusive innovation through co-design and targeted support**
  - Co-design with staff, students, communities
  - Mentoring and micro-grants for underrepresented innovators
- **Strengthen anticipatory capacity through foresight and stress testing**
  - Horizon scanning
  - Futures workshops
  - Red team testing of critical processes

Development & Impact Perspective - Value of Societal Impact

- **Demonstrate measurable societal impact aligned with the SDGs and wellbeing**
  - SDG mapping
  - Societal impact reporting
  - Impact case studies
- **Increase societal uptake and translation of research and innovation**
  - Knowledge transfer pathways
  - Policy briefs
  - Stakeholder engagement in research translation
- **Strengthen public engagement, civic capacity, and democratic resilience**
  - Science communication
  - Civic engagement
  - Media literacy

    - Cultural access
    - Public sustainability education
- **Advance co-created, place-based, and just transition partnerships**
    - Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR)
    - Sustainable cities initiatives
    - Just transition partnerships
    - Community resilience projects
- **Improve accountability and learning through robust impact assessment**
    - Societal impact frameworks
    - Alumni and community outcome tracking
    - Impact data capacity building

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